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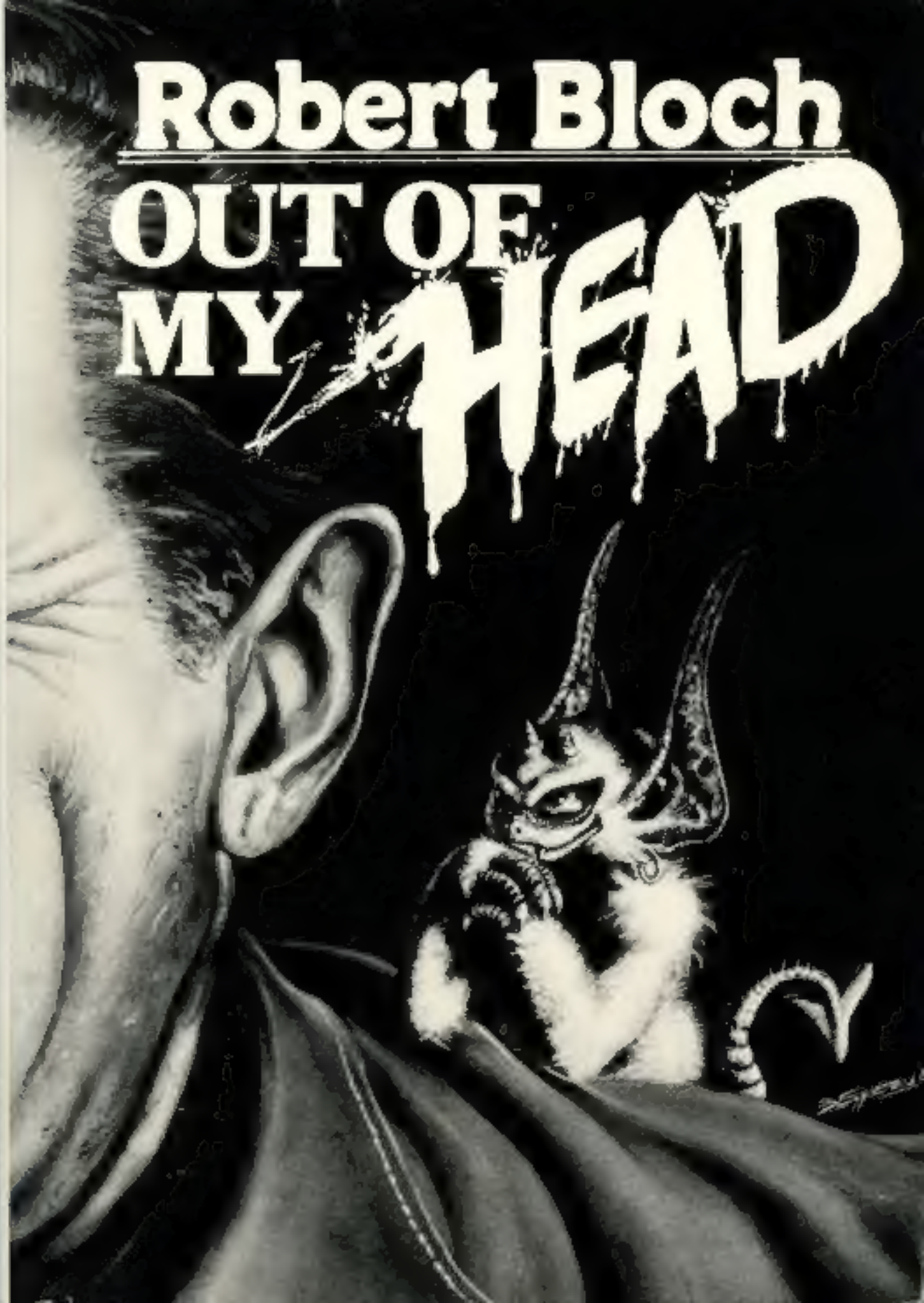

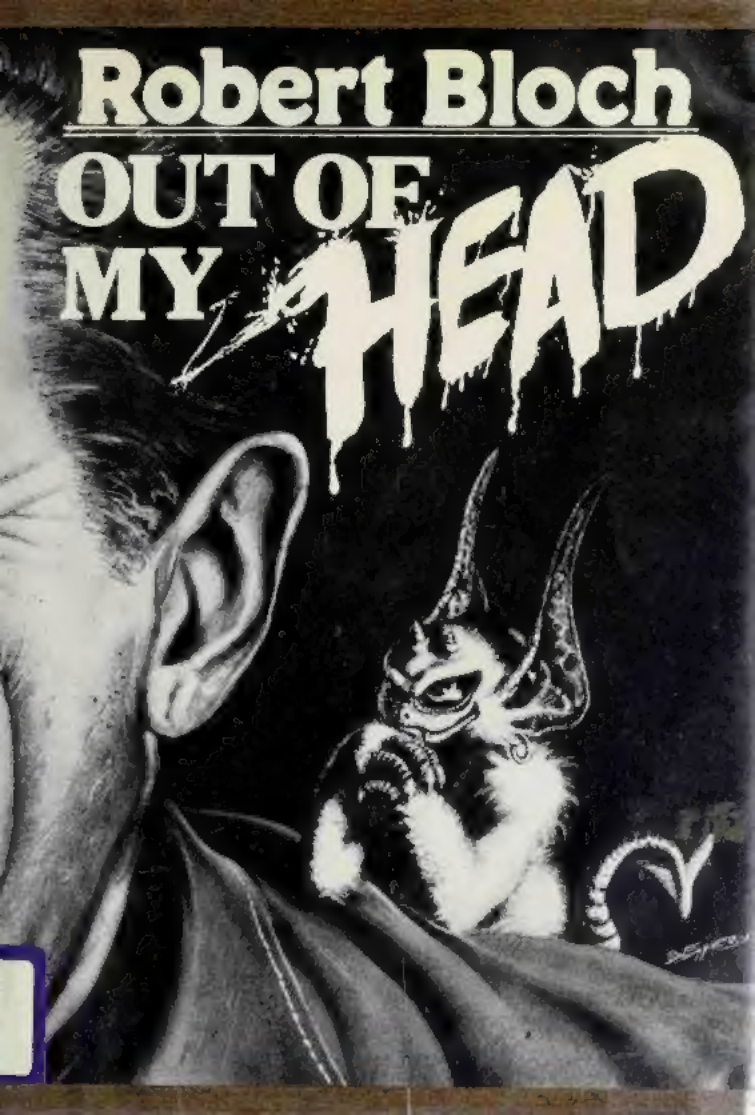
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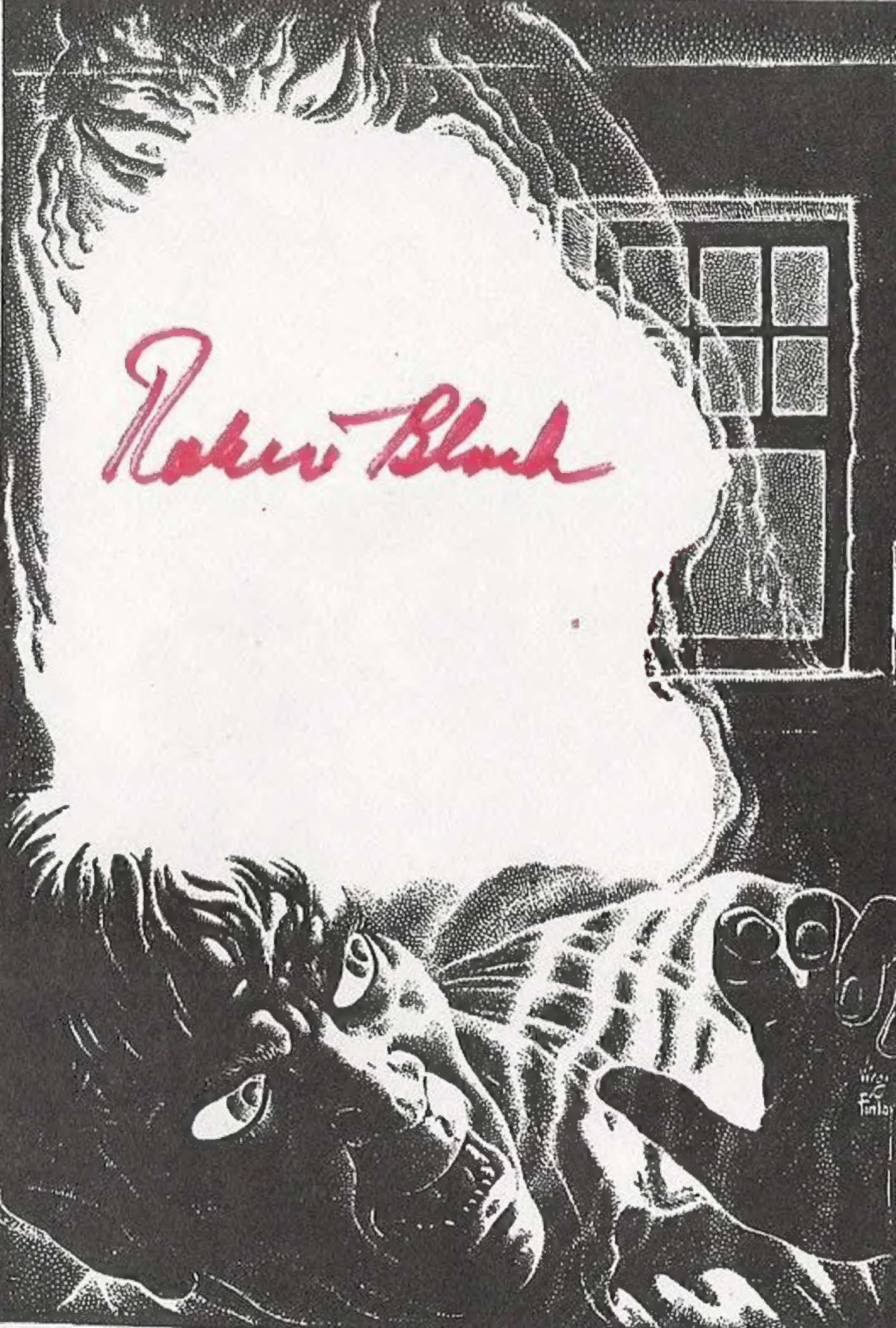
Robin Block

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It is said:
"BLOCH has the heart of a small boy

...Which he keeps in a jar on his desk."

Out of my Head

Robert Bloch

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INTRODUCTION

Four score and seven years ago — in 1982 that is — a small publishing house called Advent Publishers published a book of mine under the title *The Eighth Stage of Fools*.

Why? Because, so it was then (as now) business: being publishers, they had to publish *something*.

Why I decided to do it is another matter. I just couldn't resist the thought that, in years later, someone would walk into a second-hand bookstore, find a copy of the volume on the shelves, look at the title and mutter, "Now what the hell is *this*?"

What it was, of course, consisted of various attacks and parries of fiction I'd written over a seven-year period. At the time I couldn't imagine that the reading public would ever become aware of the existence of any less publications called fanzines, catering to the speculative interests of science fiction fanatics.

To the best of my knowledge, this was the first and only collection of fanzine writings ever published, and I had every reason to believe it might also be the last. Although fanzines had been produced by the thousands over the past thirty

years when the fiction was limited to a few hundred readers in some cases only a few dozen. And even professionally published science fiction received scant attention from critics, scholars, and the mass audience.

But times have changed since then. Today science fiction has become a respectable multibillion-dollar industry, commanding notice from respectable mainstream literary research institutes and the banks of academe. It is represented in the communications media, studied in university courses, collected by libraries, and analyzed by serious scholars explaining commercial interests or trying to devise new forms of nostalgia. Inevitably the fans and fanzines of the field have come in for their share of attention.

Today some of those fanzines are spaced, literate productions with impressive formats and impressive circulations. A number of them have even graduated from amateur status to pay for contributions. Their content ranges from *personalia* to creative essays from personal chitchat to serious examinations of every aspect of speculative fiction.

But our case history has grown apace. Its conventions are now frequently chronicled in fanzines and its process has even been recorded in books, but to the scant, though devoted, few it has acquired a history, a sense of tradition, and an increasingly bibliography of its own. Once a neglected splinter group it now exists as a recognized subculture.

It is, however, still a matter of minority interests. And as such it continues to elicit its share of jagged and ill-fitting labels from well-meaning readers with iconoclastic hurdles to jump or private battles to fight. These fans contribute to or subscribe to fan magazines where their taste or lack of taste for labels can be indulged. In a world of many words, fanzine comment is frequent and many-bitted, as

ever. Ranging from the sublime to the absolute colors from the mute to the pedestrian the fan magazines offer a viable variegated view of science fiction's rapidly expanding microcosm. Some of the writing is severe literary history and some is in the form of fiction. Some of it is ephemeral in-group or in-joke trivia.

I've written my share. And since the publication of *The Encyclopedia of Fandom* I've submitted a number of various fan publications when even time permitted and intelligence.

But it's been more than an exercise. Over the years I've developed a deep sense of gratitude to amateur editors. Many fanzines have become close friends, many have graduated from amateur writing to professional status at the science fiction field. And the fanzines themselves have served as forums as vehicles of information and observation providing valuable input media research and self-expression. Allowing me output for opinion rant and flights of fancy.

I myself began my writing career in the early fanzines. And it looks as though I'll keep at it in spite of commercial commitments. While I've not been able to maintain a regular schedule of fan magazine submissions as my receptive I've remained in the habit. And when the time came to make selections for this collection I was surprised at the sheer amount of material available. The bulk of the pieces which were finally chosen were written after 1960 but these I've added some other efforts which still have both interest.

One final addition to this book is intangible but very real—my genuine affection for fandom and what it represents—self-expression, communication, mutual feeling of friendship in a world sorely in need of same.

Maybe this sounds too sentimental. It wasn't meant to. What you'll be reading here was written mostly for self-amusement. And, hopefully, your own.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Once again, this book could not have been produced without the help of many people. I would to like thank the following people for all the help they've provided in producing this book: Mark Olson, Tony Lewis, Priscilla Podnar, Rick Katze and George Fayan helped in the story selection. Our typesetters were Claire Anderson, Kelly Persons, Wendy Glasser, Sue Hammond, Bill Perkins, Dave Carter, Mark Trumpler, Alex Lawton and Priscilla. The typesetting and production crew were Claire Sheaffer Slavsky, Kelly Jane Wagner, Sue Hammond and Rick Katze. As always, George Fayan was our chief Copy Editor and Master Proofer. Rick wrote the contracts. Chip Hitchcock provided engineering support. Yvonne Andy Meals Cowan was the Assistant Editor. Andy worked on everything from typing to proofreading to book design. Next time, this will be his job. Thanks to you all.

Jim Mann, Editor
Marlboro, MA
November 1987

OUT

OF

MY

HEAD

A WAY OF LIFE

Twirling the top of his propellor beanie nervously, the next President of the United States peered through the curtain at Convention Hall.

"Now?" he murmured.

The girl beside him shook her head. "Not yet. Let them get the demonstration out of their systems." She smiled. "Are you happy, John?"

John Henderson nodded. "Yes, but scared, too."

"Don't forget, you're the next President." The girl reminded him.

If I'm elected." Henderson grinned. "This was only the nomination, remember? And that NFF crowd is rough."

FAPA will win through." Wes Drake squeezed his arm reassuringly. "How did you like Daddy's nominating speech?"

Terrific. It really did the trick."

Yes, didn't it? Listen to that demonstration."

Together they stared through the aperture in the curtain and watched the conventioneers parade through the hall.

Somewhere in the background the organ was playing a

were yelling [illegible] everything from the religious [illegible] traditional FAPA drinking song [illegible] was [illegible] for the [illegible] Greenwich [illegible] Henderson [illegible] They were tossing [illegible] banners [illegible] [illegible] the banners [illegible]

John Henderson [illegible] Here was the [illegible] Silverwing [illegible] the flag of the [illegible] the snows [illegible] North Pole [illegible] with the HENDERSON FOR PRESIDENT signs [illegible] other [illegible]—GRINNELL WAS A GOOD MAN BUT HENDERSON IS BETTER and WHERE THERE'S A WILL THERE'S A WAY [illegible] the [illegible] some place BHEER IS THE ONLY TRUE GHOD

By now Avis's father, Lionel Drake, had mounted the [illegible] and was pounding for order, his gavel giving forth a rising rhythm.

[illegible] Big Name Fans [illegible] Lionel Drake was holding the microphone, uttering the short introduction.

"Ready?" Avis whispered.

John Henderson nodded. [illegible] on," she murmured.

He heard Lionel Drake speak his name, heard the roar of the crowd, then stepped through the opening of the curtains and faced the convention.

They cheered him and when the cheers subsided he began to speak. There was a meaningful display of his talk on the lectern in front of him, but John Henderson found himself ignoring it.

He talked slowly, at first eyeing the faces in the crowd. They were so young, so absurdly young! Many of them seemed scarcely out of their teens and less than a third were in their thirties. Out of the entire assemblage there couldn't have been a dozen old people. Francis Drake's grey head was singularly conspicuous. But then, Lionel Drake was one of the rare exceptions—one of the few survivors. He'd been alive on Ellison's Day—in the actual time of Rog Phillips and Dave Kyle and Ackerman! Of course, he'd just been a baby and he'd never seen them, but he'd been alive. And so had hundreds of millions of others. What made old Lionel Drake so unusual was the fact that he'd survived. Five billion Earthmen perished. Lionel Drake had survived, and as a survival he was one of the few remaining actual links with the distant past.

John Henderson found himself talking about that distant past now, speaking without his prepared message, not from his head, but from his heart.

"You want to know my plans, my program," he was saying. "But a statement of my plans will have to wait today. I have one thing, and only one thing, to say to you. In the immortal words of the sainted Tucker—*Fandom's Not a Way of Life!*"

He paused again. But cheering subsided.

Strange isn't it, how that phrase has survived in a shattered century. It crumbles as it may seem to us here today, it was first uttered less than a hundred years ago. We do not know the circumstances which gave it birth. We do not even know too much concerning its creator. The man

that was Wayne Parker or Arthur Parker or Bob Parker is today much less legend, we know less of the actual facts of his existence than we do of Shakespeare or H. G. Wells or Aldous Huxley and the other great artists and scientists of the current era of the past.

But legends survive. They survived in the old days before Pandora's box released the light into the darkness of men's minds. Whereupon the stars — yours and mine — were the noble exposition of humanity at its most magnificent strength. Strength to labor, the jobs and the rule of the uneducated masses, the elevens against pipes, the sports versus the Gadgets ruled was ruler the world.

You know the story, of course, the story of Pandora's curiosity, gathering secretly in dark boards at night. Lost Lore Index. Hello, the first conversation. Dreams, no power, then no recognition. They were petty and despised, looked on by lovely strangers, children. And yet they persevered. They toiled over their crude machines, plastic creations, electric engines. Those engineers in Engineering embarked into dust by who moments lost never longer be [illegible] Gone and *Higher* [illegible] are *Interplay*, *Gateway* and *Gravity* and *The Mechanics of Inertia* and *Science Fiction Theater*, *Dr. Space Starring Commercial Interest*, *Interstellar* — these names will never die!

Now, Hugo [illegible] Letter awards. A few of them were [illegible] when there was John W. Campbell, yes, and Campbell's Golden Urn. There was an Archive Golden Urn. Voted [illegible] An Asimov Booster was willing to [illegible] those marvelous works under the pseudonym of Isaac Asimov. Bencher, Campbell was the first one [illegible] his thoughts. Why, hear [illegible] comment [illegible] work. Like [illegible] they [illegible] was [illegible] use

all of them followed a single inspiration, the inspiration found in that great motto of theirs and ours—*Fandom Is a Way of Life*.

'Surely that motto must have inspired the great fan scientists of that era—men like Asimov, E. E. Smith, Arthur C. Clarke, Di Barrett and Willy Ley. The immortal Heinlein or Einstein, must have known it when he created Heinlein's Theory of Relativity which resulted in the development of thermonuclear weapons.

'And yet, at the time, the masses laughed. Today we know that all science, all invention, sprang directly from the work of these men. We still have their hardcover books attesting to their knowledge of nuclear fission, rocketry, radar, and all the other marvels of the First Age of Fandom.

But the power they possessed fell into evil hands. The bombs fell, and the intercontinental missiles landed. And from Moscow—which we know today as Moskowitz—came the war that ended the First Age of Fandom and almost ended the existence of all mankind.

'We are well aware, all of us, of the black years that followed. The years when men of good will—the few who survived—went underground. The years of plague and radiation and ceaseless surface warfare; the years of almost total disintegration and destruction. Fankind's political structure, religious structure, social and economic structure, vanished. Even the military structure could not long endure. And what was left? Only the faith of Fandom. When they burned the universities, burned the libraries, burned the books—what remained? The treasured possessions of a handful of surviving fans. In the burrows beneath the ruins of cities, in rural fastnesses like burned Bloomington and faraway Wesanwega, the few existing mimeographs continued to turn.

When scavengers sought the surface of the world again when the last raiders to outer hundreds of miles walked the face of the earth were never seen found later worse than they left. They looked upon [illegible] and were [illegible] where were those who [illegible] upon [illegible] sought to [illegible] through force. They were [illegible] another people. There were those who [illegible] were [illegible] the old [illegible] but even [illegible] kind of [illegible] industries were [illegible] military scientists [illegible] political [illegible] and the religious creeds that [illegible] the horror of war.

And it was then we knew that [illegible] men's own [illegible] Fandom [illegible] organized or [illegible] knowledge [illegible] fellowship [illegible] hood [illegible] knowledge [illegible] decades [illegible] notes [illegible] were prepared [illegible] new [illegible] and [illegible] Ray Bradbury [illegible] the [illegible] darkness [illegible] destruction [illegible] a [illegible] motto—*Fandom Is a Way of Life*

It was Fandom that [illegible] that rose to leadership. The [illegible] the Past [illegible] recorded the [illegible] the [illegible] knowledge of the past. They [illegible] to the [illegible] organizations known as FAPA [illegible]—yes—the NFFF.

At the [illegible] of the [illegible] party's [illegible] the crowd hooted [illegible] Henderson raised his hand to [illegible]

Do not allow [illegible] to [illegible] worthless [illegible] outlawed [illegible] of the FAPA—or, Fantasy Amateur Press Association—know that the NFFF is [illegible] to [illegible] The Society, the National Fantasy Fan Federation will never [illegible] to [illegible] interest [illegible]

The crowd [illegible] but Henderson went on: "I [illegible] the NFFF [illegible] Fans [illegible] Fans [illegible] Fans [illegible] *Fandom Is a Way of Life*

He paused, clearing his throat. "Remember we once worked together, all of us. Our leaders helped to rebuild the cities, helped to restore reason. Using the scientific knowledge and the wisdom preserved in the science fiction books, they brought order out of chaos. It was the application of Earnish principles that rebuilt the world. In the past thirty years we have gone far. Our world is still woefully underpopulated. Great cities remain to be restructured. But we make progress. Under the guidance of the leaders of our East Coast Cabal, under the supervision of Big Name Fans like yourselves, we are stepping forward."

First Fandoms's dream of reaching the stars is still a dream. But once again the pioneers begin to long to sound the great star. Headliners shine across our skies. Once more we are building factories and laboratories, training engineers at Dredd Brown University, preparing up in the planets from the Mount Richard Wilson Observatory, creating new diesel engines like the Bradbury Ray.

There will be no more wet Eaton Conventions, but Now that all of us are immune to Fear, Serious Constructive Facts, our sacred and political differences will never matter. Not social religious taboos, but why, but we choose to worship Ghu or Frodo or watches we exalt the Prime or Yobbot, we unite around what Asimov is the best friend to carry forward. It is this belief which will become the key point of the coming campaign: *Fandom is a Way of Life!*

John Hendrickson bowed his head and stepped back. The curtain is not waiting to take away the roaring applause from the crowd below.

He faced Wes Dick and her father with a wry grin. "Well, there's that," he sighed. "Now—what can I do for my little vacation you promised me?"

[illegible] dential campaign.

[illegible] Drake.

[illegible] haze.

[illegible] it was to be a child.

One day they talked about it.

[illegible]

organized for communication with our tapes and short wave and our mimeographs—but most of all because [illegible] *trusted* one another. And the military and fraternal groups were always fighting amongst themselves. You must remember how it was when you were a boy: we had a new President every month or so because of all the assassinations.

Henderson nodded. "That's why my folks went underground for a while," he said. "Our near Peoria. They say Philip José Farmer lived there too, you know."

"Then you know what I mean." Wis told him. "Daddy was a psychologist and he helped found the new Earth. Naturally, everybody was out to get him. Even some of the last Fan Clubs were against him—those Stevenites and Pratchettes and the other religious sects. We kept moving from place to place, never stopping for years. So I never knew any other girls my age and I never had any toys. By the time I was seven or eight, Daddy had me stapsheeting and cutting stencils on fanzines. We must have sent out hundreds before he really got cranking—a fanzine a day, and we took it to the newspapers. Gradually his plans took hold, though, and we got real people into it, and got it [illegible]. And with their help we won the first election."

Seems hard to realize, but was only sixteen years ago," Henderson mused. "I was still in Peoria when it appeared. I finishing up my courses in a private school run by one of Lan's armed Shaw Command to [illegible] of the great Shaw, but couldn't prove it, of course. Said his father had been a member of the old Elysian Club. He was always on psychology, always talking about Hubbard and Dianetics and Freud. He got me interested in the field, and that's how I met you, Isolde. And you?"

"I worked at Wonderfully Odds and Ends." The girl

squeeze his hand. "We'll sing to be sure that they aren't in on it. You learn the chorus, and we'll go together and—"

Jim Henderson shook his head. "Don't oversimplify things," he answered. "You know there's a lot of real big problems today. Everything is overpopulated. Dirt. We've got to get more people in the world at the level the world and the most it can support. Is there room in the country now? What's the population now? Maybe two billion at the most. Nobody knows, really, because we've never had a census. There are so many things we've never had that we must have. Public schools for one thing. We can't go on educating our children in the groups forever. And we've got to get them more facts and less legends. We've got to have more engineers and scientists and technicians and fewer artists and writers and multigraph operators. I still very well to say we've got half the people here working, half to keep us going, and then we have to have a lot of people running the same railroad we've had for over a hundred years. But we need so much more! Why, it will take us another fifty years just to dig out the facts. Four cities, and then—"

"Please, Mrs. Southerland, you're making me get up speed," Avis protested. "You're talking like Dr. Seuss now."

"Your father is a accidental man," Dr. Henderson said. "I don't know how I'll ever get a hundred Chessmen for me. He might as well go and get me a dozen Bengal Bengal. He says he passed me as a future President and I often suspect he picked me for a future husband."

"I don't want to be a thing," Avis murmured. "Now let's forget politics for a while."

And so they did for the remainder of that afternoon and for the rest of a glorious weekend.

It was on the following Monday that disaster struck. Lionel Drake received the sudden short wave message summoning him to FAPA Headquarters in Stargeon — the new city which had risen on the outskirts of what had once been Philadelphia. And Wyss accompanied him there on the day leaving John Henderson alone at the farmhouse with a few servants and a secretary.

Henderson spent the morning going over his press notices of the current Galaxies and preparing a statement denouncing the inane theories of a rabid van Vogt cult which had arisen to harass both FAPA and NFFF during the campaign. He did not go so far as to advocate the suppression of van Vogt's books — it was a cardinal principle that everything received from the past be preserved and kept in print for educational purposes — but he cautioned fans everywhere not to take their reading too literally. What would happen, he wrote, if we accepted Bester and de Camp and Kornbluth as fascist-isms. We must remember that many of the Masters wrote in parable and allegory. Some of them in their deep wisdom saw fit to satirize their contemporaries and their times. Others, like the learned Poul or Hans Christian Anderson, wrote outright fables. Van Vogt's outpourings were not meant to be taken as gospel."

But were they?

Afterwards, in the early afternoon, Henderson slipped away and went for a walk. He deliberately chose the country path Wyss had selected for their previous strolls — at first he struck off cross-lots towards a cluster of farmlands and farmhouses near what had once been a crossroads.

Henderson was miles at a time. Here he was, a successful

candidate, a Big Name Fan among Big Name Fans; an authority who handed down pronouncements on the meaning of the scientific scriptures. But what did he know about it, really? Oh, he'd read all the books, of course—everything that had been salvaged from the rubble. The torn and battered Gnome Press editions, the dog-eared Doubleday relics now carefully preserved in the few remaining collections, had long since been incorporated in the standard curriculum; they served as texts in every higher-grade school in the country. He'd studied them as fast as the small contingent of scholars who allowed them to turn to the past for knowledge and guidance.

Henderson had never been one to question them, certainly. When excavators had come across certain college texts in the ruined libraries of the universities they had compared them with the works of the great Science Masters and found that these men based their work on some of the principles. This was definite proof that they wrote out of revealed wisdom. But some of their more advanced concepts—this awareness of mental powers, of ESP, Psi and anti-gravity, of space travel—seemed unknown to the textbook writers.

Henderson had asked Drake and some of the others about this point. Drake told him that undoubtedly men like Heinlein and Margulies and Howard Browne were in possession of such greater secrets than they had chosen to reveal at the time—given another twenty years, probably they would have gone to the government and offered a formula which could send men soaring to the stars. But they hadn't had another twenty years. The governments of the world, persisting along conventional lines, had chosen atomic destruction instead.

That was the story.

But was it true?

Several things puzzled Henderson. He was no better or no Fake Fan but he couldn't help wondering. It must have been so persecuted and powerless in the old days. How was it that Hearst had gone to the government in the first place?

Why was it that some of the Masters' work survived in hardcover books and the writings of others equally famous had never been found in the ruins? Why weren't there any copies of the first fanzines? Granted, almost everything had been destroyed in the years of warfare, and paper was most perishable — but surely somewhere a few samples should have survived. The addresses of many of the Masters were known, why hadn't the reclamation parties and the excavators made special efforts to seek the collectors of Don Ford, Ben Mahaffey, Redd Boggs?

As it was, nothing remained but their names. Henderson had to admit it was all hearsay. He didn't know if Don Ford had been related to Henry Ford, the automobile manufacturer. Was Ben Mahaffey a storm trooper or only a brassy blonde? Had there really been an anti-social genius like Redd Boggs or was he just a FAPA legend?

Henderson found himself approaching the crest. To his surprise he discovered that a small group of farmers and local citizens were engaged in clearing the area surrounding the demolished dwellings. An ancient bull dozer had swept aside a considerable area to expose the crumbling foundations and floor of two structures.

He approached, idle curiosity mingling with sudden fancy. This was Eshbach country, wasn't it? Nobody remembered the exact location of the Lloyd Eshbach residence, but here the famous sf publisher had lived and died. Suppose a trunk, overlooked and one of those rare houses that survived the blaze? Suppose he searchers uncovered a whole cache of fan literature, something he

could use in the campaign? It was a wild, impossible thought, of course, but suppose—

Henderson looked at some of the diggers. "Need any help?" he asked.

A short, stocky man raised his head and stared at him with a little indignation. He wore no name and was obviously just a farmer.

"Sure, if you want to lend a hand. Grab a shovel." He indicated a pile of implements at the side of the road.

Henderson selected a rusty specimen and clambered down gingerly into the nearest cleared excavation.

"What are you looking for?" he asked.

"Typewriters. Glass." The stocky farmer wheezed as he worked. "District headquarters had an idea we might find some business machines here. Gang of us been donating one afternoon a week to excavating these past few years. Turned up quite a bit of stuff around Reading. Now we're getting at these villages and crossroads places. Been at this one a month. But we've got down far enough so's we may strike something today."

"Any idea who used to live here?"

"Dunno. Headquarters tells us this might have belonged to an old-timer name of Polk."

Henderson gulped.

Polk. Was his dream about to come true after all? He knew the name, knew it well. There had been a Polk in ancient fandom. Chester A. Polk.

Obviously the name meant nothing to the farmer or his companions. They were just doing an assigned job. They left their masters to the ultimate task, shoveling out debris, stopping to stack battered metal. But Henderson dug like a demon.

He soon came across the tangled furniture, the broken

springs, the shards of chinaware. He didn't join the group that puzzled over the wallpaper pieces, or even stop to examine what had once obviously been a television set. There was no more television today, Henderson knew, and ordinarily he'd have been interested in seeing what a machine had looked like.

But not now. Not when there was a possibility of finding something greater. Filing cabinets, perhaps, and maybe a desk with a locked drawer—

He dug, and the sweat poured down his face. The sun sank lower, and the farmer climbed out of the pit to join his fellows.

"Guess we'd better call it a day," he said. "Maybe we'll strike something next week. Getting right down to the basement level, see where we can pry up the floorboards. This house must have been burned, not blasted."

Henderson nodded, but didn't look up from his digging. "Aren't you coming out, Hal?"

He shook his head. "I've got another hour to spare," he panted. "Mind if I just keep going?"

"Well, suit yourself." The farmer hesitated. "But remember, if you find any machinery, stuff like that, it's public property."

"I'll remember," Henderson promised. "If I turn anything up, I'll bring it in to your district offices."

They must have left, but he didn't pay any attention to their departure. Because he had reached the floorboards now, and he was prying them up, and then he was down in the basement area. He waded knee-deep in debris, and clouds of dust arose to choke him. He blinked in the gathering twilight. Here was the rusty remains of an old fashioned furnace, there was a broken table, and on it something that gleamed dully.

Typewriter. Henderson approached it then gasped. It was a Gestetner. A mimeograph machine. Its drum broken as if it had been dragged. And beneath the table was a large metal box. He stooped and pulled it free of the rubble, wiped the dust from the top.

He read the lettering crudely daubed in black paint.

Chester A. Polk—Private

Files. This was a file. A portable, two-drawer file. And he knew it was. And he opened it. Henderson tugged at the rusty handles and it wasn't exertion that made his heart pound.

The top drawer came open. Yellowed, brittle cardboard folders. Henderson picked one up at random. It bulged with letters—typewritten letters, handwritten letters. He looked at the date. Three almost sheets. *April 1936.* He glanced through the message, then turned the page hastily and sought the signature.

Jim Harmon

Jim Harmon, one of the old-time Masters—he man who had first advocated *Harmony*, or Universal Brotherhood in Fandom, in the pages of the late, *Peon* magazine.

What if he found some copies of *Peon* itself?

Henderson hastily pulled open the second drawer.

He found *Peon*. He found *Peon* and *Hyphen* and *Inside* and a complete run—a FAPA mailing, the 75th. This was a fanzine collection, the fabulous fanzine collection of Chester A. Polk.

There was no thought in Henderson's mind now concerning strangers or strangers on the necessity of treating this matter calmly. There was only the need of gathering up the magazines, clutching up the few hardcover books at the back of the drawer, of taking them to a safe place where he could read them. He was unaware of the fact that over an hour had

If he carried everything to that spot under the trees where he and Avis usually rested, he could go through his find at leisure. And then, when he went back to the farmhouse, he'd find Avis and Lionel Drake and tell them. Show them. An hour was all he needed. Just one hour, and then—

It was almost three hours later that John Henderson staggered into the farmhouse.

Lionel Drake and his daughter heard the heavy footsteps in the hall, and Avis ran to meet Henderson as he leaned against the doorway.

"John, where have you been?" she murmured. "Daddy and I got back hours ago—nobody knew what had happened to you." She paused and stared up at his face. "What's the matter?"

Henderson didn't answer. He brushed past her, stumbled to the sofa, sat down, and buried his face in his trembling hands.

"For the love of Heber, what's wrong?" the girl gasped.

Lionel Drake rose and walked over to the young man.

"Yes, what's the trouble?" he demanded. He nearly added, "You look as though you've seen a ghost," but there was no need to. For Henderson had produced a ghost. He pulled it out from his jacket pocket and extended it, a solid palpable revenant in the form of a battered book.

Drake took it and read the title. "*The Immortal Storm*," he whispered. "A History of Science Fiction Fandom by Sam Moskowitz." There was silence, then a sharp intake of breath. "Where did you find this?"

"Where I found the rest of the stuff," Henderson said, dully. "The copies of *Oopsla* and *Inside* and *Skyhook* and *A Bas* and all the others. In Chester Polk's basement." He nodded. "Yes, *the* Chester Polk. The one who got letters from Nancy Share and Joe Gibson and Earl Kemp and even

William Roush. He went to Conventions. He played poker with Lionel once. It's all there. Everything.

Hel was about at. Was scared at. From the beginning. Daddy, isn't this marvelous?

There was one thing in Lionel Drake's lieutenant's breast that they had agreed. He stood there for a minute, looking *The Invasion Storm* in its signature hands. Then he put it down on the table.

How about a drink?' he suggested. 'After that we can talk.

Henderson accepted a drink and downed a second one without an invitation. Then he just sat there and stared.

Come on.' We urged. 'Tell us now.'

He did look at the girl when he replied. He stared at Lionel Drake.

What is there to say?' he whispered. 'You're not surprised, are you, Drake? You knew about the magazines—what they contained?'

The older man nodded silently.

Other copies have been found before. I suppose even copies of *The Invasion Storm*? And you and a few Big Name Fans have kept the discoveries from the rest of us fools like myself.'

Was Drake guessed at the two men at his bewilderment. What's it all about?' she asked.

Lionel Drake made a sudden gesture that Henderson shook his head. She ought to well know the truth, he says. It's about time somebody learned the facts. He says I learned them, this afternoon."

He never began, now, talked to us correctly. He said he old magazines, I said. And I read them. Oh, I've been to bookstores, but I've magazines, and there are a lot of old letters, too, but I'm enough to know what I'm looking

about. For the first time in my life I *do* know what I'm talking about. And that means everything I've ever believed in, everything I've been taught, everything I've tried to tell others as a candidate—is a lie.

No, don't stop me. Your father knows. He and a few others have known all along and deliberately withheld and distorted that knowledge, deliberately upheld the lies.

First of all, fandom was never a persecuted minority. There were no martyrs, no dedicated group of scientists seeking a solution to the problems of the future. There were just men who wrote stories for publication—in the hard cover books that survived and in the commercial magazines that have all been destroyed. Perhaps some of them were found again but hidden away by your father and his friends.

The men who wrote these stories were called pros or even 'dirty pros' by the fans of their day. Some of them were talented writers, some of them even possessed sound scientific backgrounds—but they were not the inventors of the things they described. They were not even the greatest writers of their time.

"And the fans themselves were another separate group. The legend has mixed up the commercial magazines with the fanzines. But fanzines were just amateur publications, privately mimeographed and distributed amongst a small circle. Most of the fans were quite young. Some of them were serious-minded but most of them were not. And they weren't there on saving the world. They poked fun at themselves half of the time. Do you know what I read in one fan magazine? It said, *Fandom is just a god-damn hobby.*

Henderson paused and glanced at the copy of *The Immortal Storm*. "There's more in the book. It tells about

the very earliest fan organizations—how they fought and feuded quarreled among themselves. The Big Name fans were a unique group. Tucker was a motion-picture projectionist. Wollheim became an editor. So did Lowndes—however was a doctor, and Doc was just a nickname.

So you see, it said a myth. This story of Fandom keeping the torch of knowledge lighted in the darkness. They weren't savants, they weren't dedicated—just a gang of people who joked and bickered about a hobby. Yes, they had crabs, and they had conventions, and they formed close friendships, and sometimes I'm even married one another. But the rest is derision. Lies and propaganda to feed the silly fan's attitude—to elevate him like some father to power on the shoulders of stupid dupes like myself.

Henderson poured himself another drink. Avis began a silent sobbing. Lionel Drake sighed heavily and sat down in the chair opposite the younger man.

"There's an old fannish saying," he murmured. "Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise." He paused, then continued. "What we say is true, of course. That's the way things were, and a small group of us has always known. We had to fabricate from time to time, and we have concealed them. Aye, we deliberately helped to create the myth of Fandom. But not because we wanted personal power."

"Why—then, what purpose could you possibly have had?" John Henderson demanded. "Setting up a falsified version of history, suppressing the facts, making what almost amounts to a religious cult out of Fandom?"

"What purpose? Home," Drake replied. "Lures one the world to sanity."

You call this sanity? Elevating juvenile antics to heroic status, putting silver wreaths on the brows of money

grubbing writers, inventing a Golden Age out of whole cloth?"

"I do," said Drake. "Remember I'm a psychologist. Oh, not one of the old time, orthodox psychotherapists you read about. My field is mass psychology, sociology perhaps. What I've done and the others have done is necessary.

"It's true we invented part of the story—the part concerning life before the coming of atomic warfare. But the rest, my boy, is true. You know it. Fandom *did* constitute the sole reliable nucleus remaining after the world was razed and ruined. As such, it formed a small operating force that could help to restore order at that time a very few men capable of operating a hand cranked mimeograph could become a potent force. Remember, they trusted one another in an age where all men seemed surrounded by enemies.

"But rudimentary skill and simple trust were not enough. As a student of history, of sociology, we knew that every important group, every important political or religious or social movement gains its strength from other sources, from legend. It is belief in legend that made the old-time movements strong—in the labor unions it was the story of Joe Hill and the Wobblies, in the Nazi Party it was the story of Hitler languishing despised and ignored in prison. I needn't remind you of the early Christian martyrs or of the Young Republicans and their stories of Lincoln the rail splitter. Out of the legends come the songs and stories, the fables and the folklore that give men faith. Faith in their destiny, faith in their future. Fandom had to find its legends in order to grow strong and succeed. An old psychiatrist named Jung pointed out the pattern common to all mythologies, demonstrated that men need heroes and sagas and epics to believe in, in order to survive in a civilized state.

But we can't found a human future on the basis of lies Henderson whispered

What says we can't Drake countered Our country was founded on the truths which sprang up at and the Founding Fathers Washington and the others met and in the rest of it From the time of Romulus and Remus in ancient Rome the myths have played their part in progress giving us a common background a set of stories to tell us meaning What one important truth is it that the legend has done its work

London *did* help to build our world Finnish towns of government were successful at restoring order We no longer need alliances treaties nations Commerce International finance We have a working economy yes but it no longer rules the world Through America's power for the first time since the days of Greece and Persia the artist and the creator play a respected and important role in life Our commerce and our industry is slowly being rebuilt but even sooner than we perhaps believe Educational facilities are increasing"

You are invited to organizing means especially our lies Henderson retorted bitterly You've noticed newspapers, no motion pictures, no television—

In time they will be restored Drake said calmly And so will the knowledge that we've learned for ourselves Don't you think we know more than we've seen fit to reveal? We have coal we will watch to build atomic power plants We have uranium for rockets, oil for emergencies perhaps even a nucleus Moon rocket we can get to it But our first task must be to build a foundation for the better world to come Yes we choose to build upon earth—but not by ignoring the truths which upheld the civilizations which have gone before Would you say

us to return to the old ways and the old myths — the Divine Right of Kings, the myth of Communism or our own mind crushing myth of the past which proclaimed that the Customer Is Always Right. Should we choose military mass murderers as our new heroes, or exalt those who perverted pure science to the ways of destruction? The legend of the Big Name Bans preserved sanity in the world for the past generations. We can't abandon it now.

'I know what you're thinking, my boy. You'd like to quit the campaign or go before the FAPA group and blurt out the truth. But what could you possibly gain? Isn't it better to aid in the cause — knowing that in the generation to come men will continue to grow in knowledge and in achievement? The time will come when we can allow the legends to die, when we can take pride in present achievement, learn to dream about the future instead of the past. But for the moment mankind needs a dream of the past to counteract the nightmare reality of what actually occurred. That is the purpose of Fandom, the true and only purpose — to give men that dream and keep them sane.'

Henderson glanced at Avis. The girl wasn't crying any longer. She was looking at him, waiting for his answer. In her eyes he read a curious mixture of love and loyalty, shame and fear. These emotions he knew were mirrored in his own gaze.

'If I go along with you,' he said, softly, 'I'm choosing the easiest way.''

Drake opened his mouth to reply, but the girl spoke before him.

'No, you aren't darling,' she murmured. 'It will be the hardest way. To know the truth and yet not tell it. To carry the burden of guilt and deceit because it's necessary. To live a lie so that all other men can live the truth.'

Peter Henderson said.

Yes, poor old Hendy. But now he's hidden — out there — where he knows it all."

Henderson rose and went to the door. Perhaps, he whispered, we'll have an away. I suppose we must try.

They walked outside, and for a moment the scene before them was blotted out by a cloud of dust. Henderson thought of the dreams this land had made real in the past — the dreams, shattered or still unfulfilled, which it must help preserve for his fellow men.

Yes, Duke would help. As would they, if only he knew. And he knew that the years to come, East Africa was still a part of the Queen's sacred. John Henderson once quoted another saying, but he'd saved it from the golden days of sovereign and Empire. Tanzania just didn't have the right ring. Now, for the first time, he grasped for the truth of its meaning.

Sadly, still staring up at the stars, he quoted it aloud.

It is a proud and lovely thing to be an

I WAS A TEEN-AGE FAUST

I'm not blaming Bob Pavlat, understand. But the fact remains that he had to be the one who brought the matter up. He had to ask Larry Shaw, Bob Tucker, and myself: *Which of all the pros there are, are we the ones who can be most spared in fandom than the others?*

Sooner or later, of course, the question was bound to be asked by someone. But I don't think it ought to have come from an FBI man or a Red-baiting Congressional committee.

Now there are all sorts of answers one can give to people of that sort. If a government functionary inquires as to what I was doing in fandom, I merely assert my legal rights and plead the Fifth—that is to say, I hold up the Fifth and Jim Bourbon and tell him that I got into fandom because I was too drunk to know what I was doing. If a passionate Christ interrogates me, I tell Bob him- self, with some explanation about associating with Reds because I suffered from a Trotophobia—a morbid fear of people called Trotsky.

But Bob Pavlat, being a real fan and not a Communist or a Christ, accepts excuses. Reds and Christs seldom if ever stand still for

are always scurrying around a mimeograph machine or squinting in front of a mirror while they trim their beards. Sometimes, of course, they seem to reverse the process. I have read fanzines which look as though they were reproduced backwards by someone who, unaccustomed to looking into a mirror, and not fans who look as if they trimmed their beards by sticking their noses in a mimeograph machine — but that's another story, and let John Berry write it.

I could, I suppose, answer Pavlat directly by telling him some of the reasons why the *other* professional writers aren't involved in fandom to any great extent.

For some of them, it's merely a matter of lacking the necessary time. A really facile professional writer — or hack — as the critics call him — can turn out a minimum of 1000 words an hour and sell same for $10 to $80, on the average. Based on pure economic incentive, there's no reason for him to abandon such a lucrative income to write pieces for fanzines or enter into lengthy correspondence with fans. On the other hand, a more sensitive, and self-consciously literate writer — or "serious" as the critics call him — can produce perhaps 500 words an hour and sell same for $1 to $3, in the very same markets — if he's lucky. And he has even more incentive to stick to his professional duties because he really needs the money in order to eat, or blow, or whatever it is that top-ranking pro authors do when they're not cursing editors.

But time is not the sole consideration which keeps some professional science fiction writers from involvement with fans. Many of them are middle-of-the-old-range that Distaff Lensman mentioned, and those who enjoy the panache and prestige of a name to stake out a maintenance claim in the field of fandom also, unless they do so to expose themselves to argument either in the columns or in person at

Conventions regarding the merits or demerits of their work. Their appearances before their reading public are carefully limited to paid lecture engagements or functions where they are honored guests or recipients of awards. Lest you think too harshly of this attitude, it is best to remember that few master-plumbers would be tempted to engage in lengthy correspondence with or convene with at their own expense an assemblage of former customers who might ask embarrassing questions about their leaky faucets and defective drip-pans.

Another factor is—if I may speak frankly for a moment—the domestic one. With few exceptions, the families of professional writers are not enchanted with his work or the readers thereof. They have seen Daddy with his shoes off and know that his feet are flat or worse. They cannot quite understand why anyone else would be interested in playing footsie with him. In the case of some spouses, they are quite afraid of just this pedal extremity. As a result, they do not care to see Pops entering into letter hacking or fanpubbing or the rooms of various guests at conventions. This is the phenomenon known as "non-professional jealousy," and it has even been in evidence in fannish circles on occasion. A non-fan just can't see why a fannish partner should wax so articulate over the phenomenon and raises the age-old cry, "Don't get your vowels in an uproar."

All of these are valid reasons as to why most professional science fiction writers are poor membership risks for the NFFF. Some will show up at conventions or occasional club meetings or enter into a limited correspondence with a few readers, but by and large their interest is curtailed by considerations of time, money, and personal responsibilities.

Now I might leave Bob Pavlat with the assumption that I am a fan merely because I *lack* this consideration. Even if this were true (and it's not) it wouldn't explain why I'm willing to make whatever compromises are necessary in order to maintain a limited but lengthy contact with fandom. Besides, if I did let the matter go at that this article wouldn't be long enough. So I'm forced to go to the ultimate extreme — even to the point of telling the truth.

I can't pretend to speak for Larry Shaw or Bob Tucker, besides they have mouths of their own — for which fact the liquor industry gives thanks daily. So what follows is merely a factual dramatization of the circumstances attending my own entrance into fandom.

The scene is the Bloch residence, 620 East Knapp Street, Milwaukee. It is autumn, the time 1934. As the curtain rises, most of the audience stampedes for the exits, but those foolish enough to remain discover BLOCH *seated before his typewriter.* BLOCH *is 17 years old and his typewriter is 20, and you couldn't get much of a trade-in allowance on either.)*

BLOCH — Goshwowbowbow, what an opening! *He reads from his typewritten manuscript)* The last man in the world sat alone in a room. There was a knock on the door—"

STRANGER — Hello, there.

BLOCH — How did you get in here? You didn't knock.

STRANGER — You're not the last man in the world, either.

BLOCH — *(staring)* Who are you?

STRANGER — Call me Mephistocles, if you like.

BLOCH — I like it, but I can't pronounce it.

STRANGER — Then try Satan.

BLOCH — Satan? The Devil?

STRANGER Didn't you recognize me? Didn't you notice my beard, my horns, my cloven hoofs?

BLOCH Sure, but I thought you were Andy Young.

STRANGER Don't mention that stage-begotten *bastard* of cheap hash houses to me! Besides, this is only 1937, isn't it?

BLOCH That's right. But it's all so fantastic—I mean the Devil appearing here in my own home like this!

STRANGER It's nothing! To tell you the truth, I was going to visit Harry Warner, Jr., but I couldn't find his place.

BLOCH Why, it's just like that story I wrote last week, where Satan shows up and makes a deal for a man's soul—

STRANGER *Wearily* It's just like the story you'll be writing twenty-five years from now. Or even today, if you're lucky and the readers aren't *Astounding* fans. I've got a good mind to drag you straight to hell for that!

BLOCH Oh no, you don't! *He snatches up a pen and thrusts it forward.*

STRANGER *Cringing.* Quick—pause—take it away!

BLOCH I thought you'd change your tune when you found out I knew C. M. Eddy. *He waves the photograph menacingly.*

STRANGER Don't—I'll do anything you say—

BLOCH *Quickly* All right, now about making a deal with me? Like the one you made with Doctor Faustus?

STRANGER Doctor Faustus? I don't remember him. Say, you don't mean Doc Smith, do you? Let me see—I've had a Lowndes and a Barrett—Or was it Max Brand's pseudo?

BLOCH Faust. I read all about it. How you made a pact

with him for twenty-four years. In return, for his soul you gave him youth and fame and romance. You showed him the wonders of the world—

STRANGER (*sighing*) Look, buster, I'm in no position to be discussing anything like that. I'm only the Devil, not L. Ron Hubbard.

BLOCH *Holds up picture again.* Are you going to cooperate? Are you going to give me what I want?

STRANGER Suppose we compromise. How'd you like to have a guaranteed lifetime income and never work? I could make you a member of the motion picture projectionists' union—

BLOCH: Not good enough.

STRANGER ... or the editor of a dirty-book magazine—

BLOCH *Hesitating.* Well, that's more like it. *Shakes his head.* No. I have my integrity to consider. I'm willing to go as far as selling my soul to the Devil, but becoming an editor—never!

STRANGER Wait a minute. I've got an idea. You say you want a deal like this that's better. I must *I could* make you a perpetual science fiction fan.

BLOCH Science fiction, fan? I know what that is. Anybody can become one of those. Even Jerry Carr.

STRANGER He wasn't even born yet! I know, I tried it on *Fanac*.

BLOCH You can't believe those rumors they print.

STRANGER Well, how about my deal?

BLOCH What deal? Like I say, anyone can be a fan.

STRANGER Yes, anyone can be a fan—for a year, two years, or even five. But I said a *perpetual* fan.

BLOCH Perpetual?

STRANGER Yes. In that way you'd have everything this guy I met you got. You'd stay young by associating

with youthful fandom. You'd become famous just like Jack Darrow and Wild Sykora and all those other immortals. As for romance—think of meeting a whole world of Rotsler illustrations come to life! You want the wonders of the world? Then travel to the science fiction conventions; go to the glamorous Hotel Ingalls in the throbbing metropolis of Bedfordshire; visit exotic Detroit; spend a thrilling weekend in far-off Chicago—

BLOCH. But we pros are not permitted to become fans on a permanent basis.

STRANGER. I can fix it for you. All it costs is your soul.

BLOCH. And in return, all this? Including a healthy sense of wonder?

STRANGER. My boy, you'll meet Sam Moskowitz in the flesh. I can even introduce you to Ackerman. And like I say, it's perpetual.

BLOCH. You mean, forever?

STRANGER. (*Smiling, warmly.*) Of course. Or until the time comes when you insist on begging me to let you stop fanning and drag you off to Hell for a rest.

BLOCH. That day will never come. I promise you.

STRANGER. Well, just to make it legal, we'll sign the usual agreement. What terms did you say this hotshot Faust got—twenty-four years? Well, I'll give you twenty-five. Sign here. (*He produces a quill pen.*)

BLOCH. (*Reading, coming to.*) Wait a minute—you can't trick me. This also makes me a member of the Science Fiction Book Club. Now I can see why they wanted me against Satan's wiles.

STRANGER. Okay, so I had to try anyway. We get commission, understand? Here, I'll cross out that clause. The rest of the contract stands.

BLOCH. Do I sign in blood?

STRANGER. Certainly.

BLOCH. Alright. *He leers grimly.* I do! Now I get everything. I'm a perpetual Dr. Feel. I have youth and fame and fortune and world travel and a pension from Bill Danner—

STRANGER. The world, the flesh and the devil. You are indeed a modern Doctor Faust.

BLOCH. *Laughs.* That's right. And don't you ever forget. Faust Faust, am I not? Dear.

CURTAIN

STAY TUNED FOR TERROR

Radio was a big thing in 1941. Everyone wanted to get into the medium, and since the atomic bomb had not yet been dropped, no one was afraid of becoming radioactive.

I had only made peripheral contacts with radio broadcasting at the time. In 1939, while working as a ghostwriter in a political campaign, I also became a ghostwriter for a Milwaukee advertising agency commissioned to handle a series of programs soliciting funds for a Catholic charity, the St. Charles Home for Boys. What the agency collected for "writing" these fifteen-minute tearjerking dramas of unfortunate jerks rescued by the Home I still don't know to this day. I didn't know that they were willing to pay me $35.00 per script. I did a dozen or so, I remember, and with no complaints or requests for rewriting.

In 1942, I'd started working with a local advertising agency myself, as a copywriter, and soon was turning out a steady volume of commercials, or "spot announcements" as they were called in those distant days. Privately I was inclined to call them other things as well, and since I'd kept

so writing fantasy and science fiction stories during my employment. I felt no hesitation about the idea of turning out fantasy and science fiction radio scripts which would at least be entertaining. That remained true—at least to me who read over the actual work involved.

The only hitch was that nobody ever asked me. I'd had one or two of my published tales dramatized on the air—notably "Yours Truly, Jack the Ripper," which appeared on the then-lugubrious popular *Kate Smith Hour* show and starred the late Lionel Cregar and "Almost Human," which I think was first performed on the *Mutual Broadcasting Theatre*—but I hadn't come up with scripts. Most of the network radio shows originated from New York, and I'd known that I wasn't going to Milwaukee by job and family obligations.

Finally the opportunity came to Mahomet. Well, maybe it wasn't Mahomet, but it was a minor prophet—and come to think of it, what came to me wasn't a mountain, actually it was more of a molehill.

Jack Doolittle, a former Milwaukee radio station owner, had a proposition. He wanted to break into the big time as a producer. I wanted to write for radio, which meant certain ambitions. If I'd provide him with a script he could work up with the then-popular horror show *Lights Out* and perhaps we'd both, he discovered, together.

I was willing to invest my time in a short radio script, and when he read it Doolittle was willing to take it as it was and shop the material directly to *Lights Out*. But perhaps the popular horror show had lost some of its popularity. Because in the week or so between Doolittle's acceptance and my delivery of the script we learned that *Lights Out* was now merely out. The show had folded.

Doolittle didn't fold, however. He scurried down to

Chicago and rounded up an independent producer who expressed great interest in doing a similar series. It would be a three way deal in which this gentleman would produce, Doolittle would act, and I'd do the writing. The only problem was that in order to peddle the package to the network the first half-dozen or so scripts must be ready for presentation. And this producer showed his independence by refusing to pay any money to me for writing them. As it turned out, he didn't have a dime, and all he wanted was a free gift in the form of a complete series idea and sample scripts which might gain him admittance — and a profit — without any contribution from himself.

Still, we were not discouraged. And Doolittle finally brought me into a meeting with two other Chicagoans. One of them, John Neblett, was a former sports announcer turned radio personality. In addition to covering minor football games he now had his own program. Still a young man, Neblett was personable, intelligent and — as they used to say — well bred. At a time when such accomplishments were still comparatively rare he piloted his own plane.

The other gentleman also of English was an agent named Bert Adams. His biggest client was the then popular small jazz combo Louis Jourdan and His Tympany Five.

They seemed impressed by our ideas and by the audition script I'd written for Doolittle. And soon we'd come up with a business agreement. What it boiled down to was simply this. Bert Adams would bankroll the cost of producing a series of forty tape radio programs, each fifteen minutes in length, to be recorded on transcription discs and sold by syndication throughout the country. Neblett would handle the actual production details, and his organization and associates would help in peddling the show to individual stations. Doolittle was to narrate the

programs and play leads under the name of Craig Dennis. And I, of course, would do the writing.

Somewhere along the line I came up with the notion of adapting my own published stories from *Weird Tales* magazine. I owned the radio rights, of course, so there was no legal problem. It was suggested that I contact *Weird Tales* and a further deal was worked out: in return for mentioning the magazine on the air, the program would be given a full page advertisement every month in *WT* itself.

A word about facts and figures. It was decided to do thirty-nine programs because this was the normal number needed for a once a week broadcast during the year, as in today's television, radio had its season of summer replacements. Fifteen minutes was chosen as the length because it kept the cost of production down; this in turn made it possible to sell the show to many smaller local stations which normally weren't able to afford half-hour syndicated shows. Syndication selling offered potentially greater profits than a network tie-in, as in television now, for work submitted interference outside say-so as to producer, writer and cast, plus surrender of at least 50% of the ownership in the package.

So. After coming up with a title—*Stay Tuned for Terror*—I sat down to work. But not before hammering out the terms of my participation in the venture. After much hemming and not a little hawing, I was offered the following alternative: take a piece of the action or a flat rate of $75.00 per script.

'Piece of the action' was a glamorous phrase, even in 1944. But it had to be analyzed. In this instance, the action was already subdivided into a number of pieces—Burke Adams's piece for financing the deal, John Neblett's pieces for producing, his organization's piece for sales

commissions in peddling the program, Doolittle's piece for narrating and taking the major leads. About the most I could reasonably bargain for would be 10% — and 10% was a very reasonable figure for providing 100% of the program material. Besides another question nagged me: 10% of what? Suppose the show didn't sell or sold very poorly?

On the other hand, 39 shows at $7,500 a show would bring me $292,500 within the space of a few months. And in 1944 $292,500 was a lot of loot — to be exact, almost as much as my current annual income. I decided therefore to take the money and run. There was a clause in my contract if we went on to the next 39 episodes I had the privilege of renegotiation. That might be the time after seeing the sales-figures when I'd opt for a percentage instead of an outright sale payment.

Okay, and away we go. Or away I went to the typewriter during the late fall of 44. And during the early winter of 45 I went to Chicago, every week, to sit in on the recording of the programs.

We worked in top-quality surroundings. CBS studios in the Wrigley Building on Michigan Boulevard. I'd generally come in to town around five, go over to Berle Adams's office, then have dinner with him and Doolittle. About seven we'd drift through the snowdrifts to the studio where Johnny (Neblett) had everything set up for the session. He'd hired Howard Keegan as our director — the same Howard Keegan who'd directed *Lights Out* — and he was a good man. I admired him even more after he confided to me that he'd always admired the real creative force behind the program, Willis Cooper, and had less regard for Arch Oboler, who came after him but by dint of spending his entire salary on publicity, had somehow managed to create the impression that he'd "originated" the show and had

brought it to glory. Knowing nothing of the inside story of radio, I'd always had a feeling that Cooper was a fine producer and writer and that Oboler wasn't his equal.

Needless to say, I was flattered when Keegan complimented me on my scripts. They weren't of Wallis Cooper quality, I'm sure, but I'd tried hard, and I had the advantage of working on my own stories so I did know the material. Most of them were adaptations, as stated, but a few were really originals — and I now hastened in my spare time to turn them into stories for publication so as to bring truth to the claim that this program brought *Weird Tales* to the air. At this late date I'm not quite sure what titles were involved. I do remember that 'Satan's Phonograph' was one, and that I never *did* get around to doing a short-story version of 'Grandfather's Clock' or 'Horror Show.'

But where were we? Oh yes, at the studio. A big room, draped in sound absorbing velvet. In one corner a god-box, as the portable organs were called in those days, due to the semi-religious quality of the music they generally played on the daytime soap operas. Our musical accompaniment was to be weird, and if there was anything at all religious about it, that religion was purely Satanism. I'm sorry to say that I can't recall the name of our organist, but he was a fine one with a knowledge of classical repertoire plus a talent for improvisation which helped build musical bridges and lent background coloration to many dramatic sequences. Also, he played loud.

Not too far from the organ was the domain of the sound effects man. I can't begin to describe in detail the array of apparatus he had spread before him in a non-visual medium it was essential to hear footsteps, doors creaking and slamming, and the sound of the wind and the rain (in net hose, if necessary) or thunder and earthquake and

volcanic eruption. The sound effects man could give you the sea, a flight in an open plane, could take you on your travels via racing automobile or plodding oxcart. Horses whinnied, birds screeched, alligators and lions roared, cap pistols snapped and cannons boomed. You name it in your script and he gave it to you. But good, and realistically.

In the foreground was the holy of holies, the sacred microphone hanging from a boom. Grouped around it were chairs, and in them, our cast. In addition to Jimmy Doolittle, better or worser known as Craig Dennis, we used as regulars Angeline Orr, an experienced and extremely capable young leading lady who worked on many network dramatic shows. Donald Doolittle, Jim's younger brother who played youthful parts or offbeat characters. Wilmis Herbert, a versatile free lance radio actor who could deliver not only the voices of fiends and monsters but the crackling of witches and the tones of feminine villainesses of all ages. As was customary in most radio shows at the time, the number of characters was kept to a minimum, as was also customary, our cast could and did "double" their parts when additional voices were necessary. But during the actual recording session there was a lot of jumping up from chairs and racing to and from the mike in response to cues.

Before the recording, though, came the run through and the final rehearsal, both attended by producer Noble, director Keegan and our sound engineer seated in the glass-enclosed booth overlooking the studio proper. I sat there too and made my own suggestions as to line interpretation, pace and musical and sound effects, etc.

But with such a competent and coordinated group—and so congenial a one, too—rehearsals seldom presented any problem. And when the time for recording came, the

got box would swing into our theme — The Number One Secret Team Tschaikowsky's *Swan Lake* which I'd selected as a sort of token tribute to the old Universal horror films which used it so frequently and we'd be on the air. Or at least on the network, in accurate or whatever they used on those strange oversized transcription platters which turned at the then-curious speed of 33 1/3 RPM and played from the outside to the inside instead of vice versa.

After the recording, a playback. Once it all was well we went on to another script. We usually cut at least three every session, working until midnight or even later. Then we closed up shop and went out for a bite to eat and a few drinks. I generally stayed over and slept in the guest bedroom at Nebbett's apartment in the near North Side where, night or early-morning train back to Milwaukee and my daily job.

By spring time the series was completed. Nebbett's sales force went out and a few months later we were getting on some prestigious major stations such as WMAQ Chicago, similar outlets in the South and West, then the Canadian Broadcasting Network, even Hawaii. There was talk of doing another thirty-nine shows, and Bert Adams, then negotiating with Mercury Records, was putting together a record album from the broadcasts.

Summer was upon us and with it the usual lull. Salesmen called and found station-managers away on vacation. Then the *salesmen* went on vacation. Suddenly Mercury Records changed hands and management and policy and the album was shelved.

Cash returns came in, but they hadn't yet accumulated in large amounts from the early sales. We had full commitments but October was a long time away and payment wouldn't start on these until November or later.

Meanwhile, in order to do another batch of shows, a big bankroll was needed now—to pay for studio space, cover the salaries of cast and crew, engineer and director.

Berle Adams was tapped out. And besides, his agency setup was changing and required his attention. Johnny Neblett was (a) madly in love with Angeline Orr and (b) beginning to concentrate on his big money sports casting assignments for the coming fall football season. Perhaps if we waited awhile, until more sales were made on the first thirty-nine segments—

So we waited. And the fall came and went, and Berle Adams's client, Louis Jourdan, suddenly got hot and demanded full-time services, and Johnny married Angeline and lived happily ever afterward—which turned out, tragically, to be a very short time indeed, for he crashed to his death piloting his private plane while on a sportscast assignment. Jimmy Doolittle went off to become an agent himself in Hollywood. And I stayed with my advertising job.

Where are they today? Berle Adams eventually joined MCA, Don Doolittle went to Hawaii, Wilma Herbert died on the West Coast. I don't know if Howard Keegan is still alive, but if so he's an old man, as for Angie Orr, I think she retired long ago. And *Weird Tales* is no more. Neither, for that matter, is radio as I knew it.

I still don't own copies of those outsized transcription discs in which all that yet remains of *Stay Tuned for Terror* is groovily imbedded. Never have owned them, undoubtedly never will.

But I've got my memories....

THE LOVECRAFT MYTHOS

Sometimes it's said the way they do. Herman Melville, an obscure government clerk, passed from this earth with the bitter knowledge that his magnum opus, *Moby Dick*, was out of print and—because of the neglect accorded him in his latter years—likely to remain so. Oscar Wilde, who had once tasted fame, died without a crumb of comfort, his work, like himself, consigned to limbo. Scott Fitzgerald's heart failure was probably less of a tragedy to him than his career failure. Few mourned Kafka, who remembered his books.

And Lovecraft? Surely his departure was the most ignominious of all, for he lacked even the cold comfort of past glories. Not only was his writing out of print, it was never achieved proper appreciation in book form, for no commercial publisher had ever assayed a single Lovecraft title during the whole of his lifetime.

Oh, he had his friends, of course—colytes, disciples, even the social scientists—all of us who formed the so-called "Lovecraft circle" of correspondents. And there were the fans, the faithful readers who published or reviewed the

occasional offerings which appeared in *Weird Tales* all too infrequently during the final years. But there had been little or no genuine critical recognition from the literary establishment—not even in the prop paper pages of the esoteric mass-circulation fantasy magazine with its lurid covers. Never mind the readership respectability of a Seabury Quinn or a Robert E. Howard.

When a struggling young writer in an obscure village pours out his work with a quality approximating inspiration it is past. Lovecraft's stories in print belie an initial reception that scarcely forced Arkham House to issue even an edition of more than 200 copies. Almost a vanity publication—hardly the appeal it was to attract the broad reception and success even in this miniscule edition it enjoyed. A second volume failed to be born critically or commercially.

And then the miracle happened. Not overnight but gradually. Lovecraft emerged from obscurity by means in method quite comparable to essays, paperback reprint, television and all the rest of the disturbing modern phenomena. Even to the alien world of the hippie Lovecraft became an instant figure. In the cult of HPL was established. Today the name and work of H. P. Lovecraft have attained a worldwide fame almost to the point but not significantly of his fondest dream over anything he could do during his lifetime.

Hard to explain?

Not when one considers in terms of miracles and cults. For Lovecraft, of course, was a god. A god who created his own universe, his own cosmos, his own Mythos.

In Lovecraft's Mythos is the pantheon of Elder Gods and the Great Old Ones, the sprawling, tough, tenacious, primal

its own. And within its minds one can seek and find the clue to the resurrection of HPL.

Lovecraft tells us the legend of Cthulhu, who sought to conquer earth and failed, and was cast into oblivion of a watery grave deep beneath the sea not to wake till human eternal exile—silent slumber forgotten by all.

All, that is, except a faithful few—outcasts, pariahs, miserable mendicants who nonetheless held him in regard veneration, worshipped his memory, chanted and his name, cult of true believers who prayed for him to rise once more and given birth to claim dominion over the earth and the minds of men.

And in the depths Great Cthulhu stirred, and his stirring caused strange beams in and the Lamas and in time he did indeed come forth. Cthulhu's renaissance was brief, as Lovecraft's own account of it has it, but though he sank again beneath the sea it was only in a second slumber from which he may yet awaken—even as HPL himself awakened to summon his followers to gather the dreams of man to tale that fantasies.

Let us also remember the parable of Yog-Sothoth, who came from beyond the stars to beget spawn upon earth of elements alien and human, bizarre creations impossible to men but both Wilbur Whateley and his monstrous other betrayed, in varying degrees, their origin like human.

Think on that. Think on Lovecraft as Great Cthulhu who slumbered—and who, lost, but for a few despised and neglected followers kept the faith through the years. Look on Lovecraft as Yog-Sothoth who perpetuated his own image in the adventures of others who returned to his works in their various ways.

We—the faithful—I knows the stories, the variations, knows the true meaning of the Lovecraft Mythos. And we

rejoice in the rise and the revelation of the one we worshipped as a mentor, a literary god.

Iaa Shub-Niggurath!

THE CLOSEST APPROACH

In 1950, on the dust jacket of *A Gnome There Was*, Henry Kuttner wrote these words: "Fantasy interests me because it is the closest approach to realism I know."

To many of the readers and friends who knew and loved him, this statement of Kuttner's seems typical of his sense of humor out of his delight in paradox.

To me, it is an example of his utter honesty. For I believe he was telling the exact truth.

Henry Kuttner won a justly deserved preeminence as a writer of science fiction, mysteries and humor. But he began his career in fantasy and stories spanning the years deserted the field.

As a teenager, with back in the early Thirties, he read *Weird Tales* and became an admirer of H. P. Lovecraft. When he began to write, it was almost inevitable that he would pattern his work in the New England Gothic style which was Lovecraft's special contribution to the architecture of the dream.

His first story, "The Graveyard Rats," established him as a full fledged member of the Lovecraft circle of

writers with whom he had already become acquainted through correspondence. The Lovecraft influence is evident in stories of his own contributions to *Weird Tales*—"It Walks By Night," "The Silver Horror" and collaborative efforts like "The Black Kiss." "Black Kiss" was encountering in those early days (never stopping, never stopped growing during his entire writing career) and he practiced stories in many genres. Some of them were undistinguished: "The Secret of Kralitz," "We Are the Dead," "Spawn of Dagon" (to which was already evident that he was in the process of assimilating styles—e.g., analyzing attitudes toward—the works of many writers. I am sure. He produced poetry, both dreary and more overt in the manner of Chesterton and Robert E. Howard. He did swashbuckling fantasy such as "Thunder in the Dawn." Under his own name and the last of many pseudonyms he wrote a wide variety of material. For a short-lived magazine called *Strange Stories* there was "Hydra," "Cursed Be the City" and two more extraordinary items with me which appeared near the Kuttner byline: "The Body and the Brain" and "Grip of Death." He also produced the first of what was to become a permanent series of collaborative ventures with C. L. Moore: "Quest of the Starstone" in which the Moore series characters Northwest Smith and Jirel of Joiry met. By the time he left us home and job in Cleveland to become a full-time writer in New York, Kuttner was no longer recognizable as a C. L. Moore imitator. His own style—or styles—had not yet evolved, but he had already given ample evidence of his versatility and adaptability. During the next few years he lived the life of a literary carpenter, writing anything and everything from comics to love pulps. His reputation as a hack of all trades was exceeded only by his

prolific powers, which excited the admiration of editors, the astonishment of readers, and the envy of his fellow authors in the pulp field.

The period of 1939-42 was the Twilight of the Gods. There were giants in those days: men like Arthur J. Burks, who wrote and sold 1,500,000 words a year, and younger emulators such as Frank Gruber and Steve Fisher who filled the pages of many a pulp magazine with fiction under a dozen pseudonyms. Henry Kuttner joined their ranks — and so did Keith Hammond, Kelvin Kent, K. H. Maepen, Paul Edmonds, Lewis Padgett, and many more bogus bylines.

But if Kuttner was not content to be a neo-Lovecraft, neither was he satisfied to be a pseudo-Fisher. Slowly but surely, he kept evolving and experimenting, and his progress is plainly evident in his fantasies of this period. For it was in the fantasies that he continued to expand the natural bent of his growing abilities as an author.

There was "Masquerade," in *Weird Tales*, perhaps the first of the adult Kuttner stories. For *Unknown* and *Unknown Worlds* he did a series which charted the changes on a variety of influences: "All is Illusion," "Compliments of the Author," "The Devil We Know," "A Gnome There Was," "The Misguided Halo," and others. In these stories one can detect his love of, and complete understanding of, such writers as Thorne Smith, John Collier, and L. Frank Baum.

The market for fantasy dwindled during World War II and shortly thereafter, Kuttner turned almost inevitably to science fiction. He had written his share of stories in earlier years — just as he'd turned out mysteries and adventure yarns for the editors who assigned him such routine chores — but aside from a few brilliant touches in the Pete Manx series, there was little evidence of his original creativity in the bulk of such previous work in this field.

Now he invested his mature intention and abilities in the writing of science fiction. But he brought something new and fresh: the element of fantasy.

In his autobiographical sketch for *Ahead of Time* Kuttner again revealed a basic truth about his work and his attitude: "As for the science fiction field itself, I believe I'm interested in it because it is the imaginative-fiction medium."

And so it was—in a small part due to the collaboration Henry Kuttner made out during the Forties singly, and in collaboration with his wife C. L. Moore, he began to write the stories which won him fame and a secure reputation as a skilful master of the genre. Under his pseudonyms Lawrence O'Donnell joined the ranks at this time, along with several others he continued to turn out alone and with his wife, any number of bread-and-butter efforts including a respectable amount of book-length work. But his best and best remembered stories were still imaginative fiction, i.e., fantasy in a science fictional disguise.

There was "Mimsy Were the Borogoves"—and here was the Kuttner who knew and loved Alice in Wonderland rendering a loving later day tribute to Lewis Carroll. There was "The Twonky"—and who has so aptly transmitted the legend of the Golem and Frankenstein's monster into meaningful modernity. There was the immortal Hollisters family, the wonderful and wacky Gallagher series, the—and go and read them for yourself and see how marvelously Henry Kuttner blended the Sense of Wonder with his sense of humor without for a moment losing a sense of balance and fitness.

And there were the ever increasing profusion, he sent us stories. The Baron's ESP ones, the grimly memorable "Don't Look Now," "The Cure," "Shock," "Home Is the Hunter,"

For Kuttner had gone full gamut — from the Gothic past to the galactic future — and then realized that there was still the greatest field of imaginative speculation left to explore *the human imagination itself*

I do not know if he ever expressed himself upon the subject of psychological fantasy. But through our many years of personal contact and correspondence I became increasingly aware of his interest in psychotherapy and its potentialities. On the face of it, after 'By These Presents' and 'De Profundis' in the early Fifties, he seemed to abandon the 'fantasy approach' to fiction. But in actuality he was still exploring enchantment, delving into the deepest and darkest dreams of all, that murkiest of mysteries which is the mortal mind. He had discovered that the true 'world of imagination' is the little grey globe each of us carries inside our skulls.

Now I have deliberately avoided personal reminiscence in this discussion of Henry Kuttner's work, and for personal reasons. He was — and always will be — close to me, and a rehearsal of our relations over a period of twenty-three years is inappropriate. But it is necessary for me to say this: that Henry Kuttner was a modest and a humble man. He was his own severest critic and his harshest task-master, too. All during his professional career he *studied* writing, studied other people, studied himself. He was constantly striving to do better work, and conscientiously preparing for it. There were books he'd planned for the future — which he felt that he was ready to write them properly. And these books were not science fiction novels; they were not the psychological-detective mysteries, they were not suspense thrillers, they were simply stories about people. Realistic or mainstream novels? Perhaps in outward form. But actually what Henry Kuttner was contemplating

eventually was the creation of a whole new field of fantasy, the *real-life* novel of the imagination. He had no intention of emulating the "stream of consciousness" school or of treading the rocky road of Kerouac, nor did he expect to emulate the eclecticism of a Proust. He was merely experimenting endlessly in search for the proper form in which to reveal the substance.

Do not let these words mislead you. Kuttner was not self-consciously pretentious about his goals nor egotistic, nor ambitious. Anyone who had the good fortune to know him can give the lie to this. He was far too self-critical for any self-deprecating, far too self-involving to ever regard himself as a dedicated writer. And what I have written here about his plans is the embodiment of my own concept of his purpose, gleaned bit by bit through the years of conversation and correspondence and never self-dramatized in the form of a direct statement on his part. For himself, Henry Kuttner was merely honestly and earnestly attempting to evolve a style and a method of writing the stories he wanted to tell—the stories which would reveal the fantasy behind our reality and the realities behind our fantasies.

Now those stories will never be written. It is a mournful realization and forms a part of the sense of loss which is shared by all of us who cherished Henry Kuttner as a friend. But we still have the memories of the man and the tangible evidence of his talent afforded by his published work. And we have at least an inkling of what might have been. Somewhere, perhaps, someone will take up the challenge he formulated and then faced—and go forward to write the fantasy of the future. Whoever that someone may be, in order to succeed he will need a brilliant mind, an insight equally penetrating in both objectivity and subjectivity of approach, a sense of humor and a sense of tragedy, and

a magic pen dipped into an inexhaustible fount of empathy and understanding.

That's the necessary equipment for anyone who ever hopes to closely approach the potential achievement of Henry Kuttner.

SUP FULL OF HORRORS

I have just had a telephone conversation with Dracula.

It was not a long-distance call from Transylvania, a night time rates. Instead the message emanated from the nearby Beverly Hills Hotel in broad daylight, but the voice delivering it was unmistakably that of Christopher Lee — the most distinguished and definitive delineator of Dracula in our time.

He phoned to tell me that Dracula is dead. Truly dead as far as he is concerned — and he, of course, has been concerned with this seemingly immortal character for the greater part of a long career.

But that's finished now, he told me. I shall never play the role again."

Requiescat in pace.

But will Dracula truly rest? Will he find peace in oblivion at last? And why should Christopher Lee suddenly swap the duties of a Van Helsing and drive a stake through the heart of the fiend who made him famous? Why should he thus remove his fangs from the jugulars of their victims in order to bite the hand which feeds him?

Because even Lee's considered opinion — Dracula has himself become a victim, victim of cut-throat commercialism. A vicious, cheap exploitation of already sensational subject matter, of stock-in-trade techniques. The Count's dignity has suffered countless indignities at the hands of today's horror-mongers.

On horror: 'Horror films are created on the name.'

Vincent Price: 'I laughed when I was approached by so many less than serious individuals like the late great Boris Karloff. He spoke from a real and fresh attitude of the term "horror film". Terror or fantasy best describes the sort of film with which I've been associated. Indeed, Blood has never been my intention to create — and I don't like kindly to the sort of sex-and-violence-for-the-sake-of-it thing they're doing today.'

Christopher Lee has not yet gone so far as to disown the term. 'The good part is offered to me in a legitimate horror film. I'll accept it. He says: 'I'm not turning my back on the fable — only on the Dracula series and similar exercises in excess.'

Excess it would appear has become a synonym for staleness. A desire to shock pictures where penis-sweetness presently prevails. The genre which once generated right-at-the-mere-sight-of-anything Lee in *The Phantom Of The Opera* has now escalated its effects to include on-camera dismemberments, disembowellings, entrail-eating and other associated atrocities *ad infinitum* and nauseatingly *ad nauseam*. It has reached its apogee — or its nadir — in the disaster-fill-as-we-film-it-movies of thousands. The gross innocents are drowned, suffocated, burned, have crushers to death, and otherwise folded, spindled or mutilated.

Coincidentally, television has focused its hazards not on violence. With less graphic — or pornographic — intrusion

portrayal it has abandoned consideration of the quality of suffering and concentrated upon quantity instead. Its policemen heroes and private eyes—bloodshot or otherwise—encounter an endless succession of savings week in and week out. But as the body-count increases, the urgent reality is inflicted upon the constantly coarsened sensibilities of the viewers.

Moreover, the distinction between dramatic representations of horror and reality has become increasingly blurred. Atrocity is no longer the specialized activity of supernatural entities or a few lunatics at large in the darkest deeds are now done in broad daylight by next-door neighbors. Teenagers set fire to old men, contemplated housewives carve out new careers with butcher knives, and respectable middle-aged members of the establishment usurp Godfather roles in disposing of their business rivals.

Inevitably this phenomenon is manifest in the printed medium. Consider the following fictional fragment:

A small child cowers in helpless dread as he watches two men forcibly rape his mother on a kitchen table while murdering her with a knife. After consummating the dead body, one of the men strips the skin from her breast and preserves it for use as a tobacco pouch.

Anyone put off by the works of Jacobean playwrights such as Webster, with sick relish by a merciful few, *guess what* is the *source*? No indeed—this bit of rot so *grand guignol* was lovingly penned by none other than best-selling pop novelist Harold Robbins for the delectation of untold tens of millions of readers, down to his agent in *The Carpetbaggers*.

Small wonder then, that other and more critically respected practitioners of prose have since effectively exceeded him in savagery. And the avowed writers of horror fiction followed suit—welcoming new recruits to

ghosts on cue to go bump in the night or to wander of their own plausible purposes, peopled as they are upon the moment with our own ever-the-hunted-or-supernatural tat or ride. And what they still have to say to the legend-the-living is written in this: Gone is the Eastern Europe with its genteel ennui debonair and bargaining, for a Lucian small miss [illegible] to be more to distil. Spectacular [illegible] spotted discovery spewing little girl with hot head twisted backward at a 180 degree angle.

It is ostensibly a new twist on this persistent investigation of physics to correct with error and of human behavior. But as might be expected at this yoke of early and salvage romance quickens. Present there is the usual talk of the reasons for the ordinary to work, from short to orchestral, with regulation have voluntarily decreed a diminution of death and destruction during their peak viewing hours. Less crime, fewer premature births as well. In the fictional world the old persists: the recent spate of paperback novels dealing with sadism, Avengers, Executioners and their surrogates. Mickey Spillane and Jonas Ward premature has been counterbalanced by the mass production of so-called Gothic romances, exploiting the [illegible] basics of Daphne du Maurier's gothic adaptation *Rebecca*. Since her novel, the public has exploited a wonderful [illegible] story for its readers, has announced supernatural premises for extraterrestrial explorations, and took refuge in the science fiction magazine and anthology. But even here, to be honest, [illegible] publicly proclaimed, the pursuit, pursuit of [illegible] sex, blasphemy, foul language, and other modern accoutrements of today's storytelling.

So *you* said? Why is it [illegible]?

The choice appears to be between the [illegible]

pendulum—the pit of iniquity of still deeper degradation of literary form or the pendulum-swing of public taste and opinion, moving toward regulation and repression.

Neither extreme affords a sane solution. The amoral attempts of some authors to outstrip the porno flicks in obscenity and compete with the overkill of the slaughterhouse school of fiction is as distasteful as the sanctimonious censorship which would in effect totally destroy the field by throwing the baby out with the bloodbath-water.

Some of the responsibility for this sorry situation must be shared by members of the critical establishment. Traditionally, the critic—and latterly, the part-time writer of reviews—has assumed a high profile in an effort to indicate lofty intellectual status and the superiority of his calling. There has been a tendency towards pretentious obscurantism: to dismiss or to avoid entirely the 'popular' while seeking out little-known works—preferably foreign translations—for lengthy consideration. The late Edmund Wilson affords a perfect example: he doted upon disquisitions devoted to Russian writers as a one-upmanship ploy because—as he frequently reminded his readers—he knew the language and read their offerings without the aid of translators. And in the lack of a Russian, French, or Latin-American work of sufficiently obscure origin to serve as an excuse for an exercise in erudition, he could always return to a reexamination of the darling of intellectual snob appeal: Henry James.

Other critics and reviewers, lacking his multi-lingual aptitude, could still emulate his approach, though in a more limited fashion: by emphasizing the supposed superiority of exotic foreign writers whose work was

available in translation—Gide, Sartre, even a Françoise Sagan.

Mystery criticism followed suit, giving Montherlant and Simenon disproportionate attention, plus a gaggle of Scandinavian "discoveries."

Precisely the same pattern occurred in cinema reviewing—once a lowly occupation, but recently elevated in esteem when motion pictures were transformed into "film." Again critics became *avant gardistes*, first concentrating on Italian product, then the work of Bergman, then Kurosawa, and latterly immersing themselves in the French "New Wave."

Unfortunately for the fantasy and horror fiction field, there have been comparatively few foreign discoveries to acclaim, aside from Tolkien and his *Lord of the Rings* series. But during the Sixties British writers of science fiction created a "New Wave" of their own, and for a time critics were content to extol—and American writers satisfied to emulate—this output.

In recent years, however, it has become painfully evident that this output offers very little worthwhile input. And once again, the critics are turning away.

Herein lies a serious error.

For American audiences and American readers are turning away, too, but not from the fields of fantasy, horror, and science fiction *per se*. They are turning away, instead, into the past, and their resurgent interest has created a renaissance for the very work which the critical establishment has reviled or ignored.

Suddenly the film societies, on- and off-campus, has turned their attention to the "classic" horror and fantasy of Fritz Lang, Murnau, Whale, Hitchcock, and Val Lewton. There is a new and growing appreciation of the power and potency of fantasy on the screen. Whereas "serious" critics

were content to lump all such product under convenient and contemptuous labels young people have begun to evolve their own criteria Thus they separate *Frankenstein* and *The Bride of Frankenstein* from the inferior 'follow-ups,' discriminate between the symbolic strengths of a *King Kong* and the mindless monster movies of the *Godzilla* imitations appreciate the artistry of an *All That Money Can Buy*, the subtleties of *The Cat People* and *The Body Snatcher*, the impact of a *Diabolique*, the wry grotesquerie of a "lost" film like *The Old Dark House* Now even the films of the late Lon Chaney, Sr are finding new favor, students recognize that they are 'dated," just as they know *The Birth of a Nation*, *Intolerance*, *Potemkin*, and *Citizen Kane* are 'dated' but also timeless For the best fantastic films retain a psychological immediacy of effect their symbolism stirring subconscious response

In television, that self-proclaimed modern medium with its insistent emphasis on the 'new season' and its arbitrary avoidance of the old-fashioned or outmoded, a similar phenomenon is—quite literally—visible 'No one,' ac cording to the networks' guiding geniuses is interested in black-and-white offerings of a bygone day Yet now, after two decades the *Alfred Hitchcock* anthology series continues to run and re-run, the *Thriller* anthology still airs fifteen years later, while modern imitations in full color, with their 'today' heroes and 'relevancy' fall by the wayside Even the comparatively juvenile *Star Trek* continues in popularity a decade after its official demise because its simplistic 'sense of wonder' offers something to science fiction fans which is totally lacking in contemporary 'serious adult' approaches to the genre

And the parallel phenomenon exists in print Persists rather for there has never been a diminution of interest in

the science fiction of Heinlein, Clarke, Asimov, Bradbury, van Vogt and a half dozen other writers who established a beachhead many years ago without the aid of the critics and were not dislodged by the 'New Wave.' In fantasy the once-reigned or excoriated by Edmund Wilson who chose Howard Phillips Lovecraft has come into his own as a worthy companion to Poe, Dunsany and Machen. For years the Anglophile academicians pointed steadfastly in the direction of the traditional British ghost story in which genteel elderly clerics experienced brief dismay upon encountering an apparition in an abbey — but Lovecraft, who broke with tradition and created his own chilling cosmogony presently and deservedly prevails.

Few *fantaisistes*, aside from the scholarly accredited English or expatriates such as the aforementioned Henry James with his *The Turn of the Screw*, have ever found immediate shelter within the groves of academe. Mrs. Shelley was not welcomed, Bram Stoker was expressly excluded and there is no need to comment upon the rude reception accorded Edgar Allan Poe during his lifetime. In 1891, when Herman Melville died, his great symbolic fantasy *Moby Dick*, was not only out of favor but was completely out of print. And the rejection of popular children's works is a story unto itself — it took decades for *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass* to gain admittance to the sacred glades generations introduced to the *Oz* books by parents and grandparents found no welcome for their favorites in current curricula.

As with the critics, there is a tendency on the part of certain editors to equate 'magic' and the supernatural with fairy-tales. Admittedly, there has been and is a great deal of trash and trivia manufactured within the field of imaginative films and fiction. But objective consideration

instantly separates *Buck Rogers* from *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, or *Dead of Night* from *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. Even casual consideration can evaluate the difference between the work of C. L. Moore, Theodore Sturgeon, Lester del Rey, or Clifford Simak and the catchpenny production of the hacks.

Long disregarded, it is the fantasy-element which forms the basic strength of the work of Kafka, Hesse, and James Joyce, giving it true "relevance" today.

It is for this reason that I urge recognition of the best in contemporary fantasy, horror, and science fiction fields. We have recently expanded our awareness of the psychological and sociological importance of the fantasizing elements of our psyches, both in art and in real life. The Freudian tendency to associate imaginative output with the psychotic has gradually given way to an awareness of the Jungian dictum, we are beginning to comprehend the role played by symbolism and myth.

Our fear of actual horror and violence is unquestionable, and justified. Our aversion to the overly-explicit depiction of fearful cruelties needs no explication. But there is a need to recognize the elements in our nature which respond to such fearsome phenomena: a need for *katharsis* and for understanding; a need to explore these realities with the guidance of artistic mentors.

In an age where the antihero increasingly dominates drama, when the so-called "black comedy" serves as an excuse for antisocial aggression, the field of imaginative literature becomes increasingly important for its adherence to the positive values and ideals of our society. If the fantasy, the horror tale, the science fiction story is indeed a "fairy-tale," let us not use the term contemptuously — for it is precisely in this respect that the form is worth preserving.

In the so called 'popular' classics we find the equivalent of the medieval morality play: the cosmic battle between the forces of good and evil, in which virtue emerges triumphant.

The best of the genre still exalts the hero — whether he be man of mystery or man of science. Sometimes, like Prometheus, he pays a price for stealing the secrets of the gods; but we recognize the will to dare: the will to learn. In other instances we even laud the monster as tragic hero, motivated by rejection or revenge, and in so doing, gain an insight into the rebellious elements in our own nature, the destructive impulse which leads inevitably to self-destruction.

The role of the academician is to teach — and surely there are lessons to be learned from fantasy in all its forms. Nor can we dismiss the aesthetic experience, the best work elevates artistry to art. One shudders to think of what might have happened had the Greeks been caught up completely in consideration of Pythagoras and condemned the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as 'mere heroic fantasies' unworthy of consideration or preservation, if the scholars of the Near East had devoted their attention solely to 'reality' and condescendingly consigned the Bible to oblivion as a repository of superstitious myth.

Man is still in need of myth today, and it ill behooves academe to ignore the importance of our modern myth-makers.

The title of this little essay, by the way, derives from *Macbeth*.

Shakespeare had his problems too.

OLDIES BUT GOODIES

I have written elsewhere that a science fiction convention is like an old-fashioned traveling circus. It comes into town, sets up, and over a period of four or five days creates a little world of its own, then suddenly, it's gone again and there's no evidence that it ever existed.

Except, of course, in the memories of the audience.

We who attend conventions can remember—as circus-goers do—the glamor and the glitter, the star performers, the feats of daring, the ballyhoo and fanfare, the wild animals, the clowns. And believe me, science fiction has its share of these items, very definitely including wild animals and clowns. To say nothing, in recent years, of freaks.

But for most of us, personal memories are our only source of satisfaction. A few Worldcons have printed resumes (the 1962 Chicon's *Proceedings* is perhaps the most outstanding example), but aside from individual con-reports in fanzines, there's little else to show what took place at one of the three ring circuses which annually celebrate the existence of science fiction fandom. The

regional conventions—many of which are now as big or bigger than early Worldcons—fold their tents and fade away. Again, one must rely on recollection.

Somehow, whenever I attend a Worldcon and see familiar faces once again, my own recall is stimulated, and I begin to evoke visions of the past. Oldies but goodies, as the record albums put it.

Here are some of mine:

Los Angeles, 1946. My first Worldcon I attended mainly at the urging and insistence of Forry Ackerman. When my plane was grounded by an air strike I took a train and arrived two days later—largely because I wasn't going to let Forry down. After all, he was on the convention committee and I'd promised to see him. When the train pulled into the station, eleven people were on hand to meet me. Ackerman wasn't there. He wasn't at the convention, either. It seems he'd collapsed at the opening session and gone home to bed. I never *did* see him during my stay in Los Angeles. At first it seemed tragic and then rather humorous. Today I realize that Forry was just ahead of his time. I'm sure that he meant to set a precedent for Convention Chairmen who look over that sea of faces at the opening session and realize they should have stood in bed.

Toronto, 1948. I was involved rather heavily in the proceedings here, but not quite as heavily as David H. Keller, M.D. The good doctor really took over—or, rather, his wife took over for him. Whenever he came into the meeting hall during a session, Mrs. Keller preceded him and loudly announced, "The Doctor is coming!" whereupon the program halted until David H. Keller was seated. During various panel discussions, Mrs. Keller would get up and proclaim from the floor, "I'm sure the Doctor has something of interest to say about the subject"—and, sure

enough, he always did. Bob Tucker, George O. Smith, and I were drafted to help the Canadian contingent with banquet entertainment and we worked hard at setting up a last minute program. We needn't have bothered. Midway through the affair, Mrs. Keller rose to her feet and said, 'I have persuaded the Doctor to tell us an amusing Shakespearean anecdote he has often related.' Whereupon the program halted once more while the Doctor delivered a lengthy monologue concerning that eminent sf writer, Wm. Shakespeare. Today, in all fairness, I realize that if anyone was entitled to be Guest of Honor at that convention, it was David H. Keller. But at the time I was just a wee bit sorry for the actual pro Guest of Honor, who happened to be — me.

New Orleans 1951. After traveling 900 miles I arrived in this faraway city and was promptly informed that I was in charge of publicity and press-relations for the convention. Inasmuch as this was the year when two major motion picture studios — Paramount and Twentieth Century-Fox — decided to screen their major new sf films for the convention and sent their personnel to make sure they got sufficient news coverage, the publicity job was a bit more sticky than usual. We couldn't settle for one of those 'Ha ha, the Flying Saucer nuts are in town!' treatments. Well, thanks to Dan Galouye, the newspaper stories worked out on an adult and complimentary level. But my fondest memory of this particular convention involves the banquet entertainment, which — as was the case in Toronto — was impromptu. Declining the dubious honor of serving as toastmaster for a non-existent program (which request was made of me exactly one hour before the affair began) I did agree to a speech. By default, the toastmastering fell to a toastmistress — Judy Merril. And I shall never forget her words as she arose to take charge, smiling sweetly at the audience, she said, 'I really have nothing to say.' For some

reason or other I admired the lady's utter candor and wish others were as truthful under similar circumstances

Chicago 1952 Willy Ley made a speech denying the existence of flying saucers his chief point was that none had ever been photographed or observed from above only from below When I was unsuccessful, this time around in bowing out of the toastmaster chores at the banquet I called Willy up to the platform from the audience 'You never saw a flying saucer?' I asked 'Well here's one' And I threw a saucer at him Willy bless him delighted me by grabbing the mike and retorting 'Yes but I still saw it from below'

Midwestcon 1953 All of the Midwestcons through the '50s provided memorable moments but this affair offered one incident I'll always cherish Arthur C Clarke turned up, fresh from his Book-Of-The-Month triumph with *The Exploration of Space* Little did I realize the fun I would get through the years heckling the supposedly dignified and proper Mr Clarke not until the second morning of his stay that is We were down at the shore of the lake and Arthur was describing the flamingoes he'd seen on a recent Florida vacation 'Great awkward creatures,' he said 'They go like this' Whereupon Arthur rolled up his trousers to display his legs, stuck his hands under his coat and flapped the sides like wings and waded out into the water, shrieks and all, squawking happily From that point on I loved the guy

Philadelphia, 1953 of course, was memorable for meeting Isaac Asimov I saw him again in *Cleveland 1955* and at the *Second Nycon, 1956* and *Detroit, 1959* I have many favorite memories of Ike — particularly those times we shared the platform together In Detroit he managed to fix things so that in announcing the Hugo winners I opened up one of the envelopes and discovered my own

name. So help me, in those far off naive days before campaigning for votes, I didn't even know my story had been nominated until I arrived at the Con. But they'd told Asimov, and he made the most of it.

San Francisco, 1954, gave me a chance to really get to know Tony Boucher. There's another who, like Willy Ley, I shall miss, because both men contributed so much to the pleasure of convention attendance. It was Tony who, in Cleveland, led a group of us late at night into the wilderness called Jackass Hill to search out the site of the Cleveland Torso Murders.

Los Angeles, 1958, was a wild one, that was the year this 6'6" actor Did His Thing at the masquerade ball in a grotesque monster outfit and then led a parade of fans through the streets of downtown L.A. ending up by creating a neat riot in Pershing Square. And there was *Chicon, 1962*, with the crowd walking up the down escalator; the hotel management went a little berserk over *that* spectacle.

London 1965, was my wife's first taste of conventioneering. She didn't quite know what to expect until Peg Campbell stopped me just before we went into the banquet and asked if I was going to speak. I said yes and she smiled. "Please promise me to insult John," she said. He'll be insulted if you don't." My wife did a double take and I never did manage to explain the situation.

Baycon, 1968, was the time when Judy-Lynn Benjamin—but enough, I'm quitting before I grow lachrymose. I'd hate to do that, because I'm not sure of the spelling.

All I'm sure of is that I treasure my convention memories—and hope there'll be many more.

For the lowdown on *St. Louis, 1969*, read my report in a forthcoming issue of *If*.

For the *real* lowdown see me at the next Worldcon.

TWO GREAT EDITORS

In view of what has happened in our little microcosm in the last six weeks, I decided that instead of making a formal speech I would talk about two people I had the pleasure of knowing -- John Campbell and August Derleth. I feel there are times when it is perhaps good to remember some of these people who are gone from our midst, remember what they meant for us, what they did for us. I'm not particularly noted for my sentimentality, but I decided tonight I was going to throw away all the Harlan jokes and I was going to talk about these two men.

First, John Campbell. I don't have to tell you the place that Campbell occupied in the science fiction world. He occupied a particular place in my little world too. I never wrote the type of science fiction that John Campbell would publish. As a matter of fact, I never submitted a science fiction story to him nor did my agent of mine at any time during all those years. When *Unknown* (later *Unknown Worlds*) came on the scene I did submit three stories, and he bought which he published. But I had this long-standing agreement with John Campbell. I would never submit

a science fiction story and he would never reject one. It worked out well for both of us.

I didn't meet the man until 1932 in Chicago, but after that I saw him quite a bit at various conventions. When my wife and I went to England in 1936 we attended the World Convention there. It's supposed to be the first time that my wife had been exposed to this particular brand of masochism and she didn't quite know what to expect. She knew, of course, who John Campbell was and who several of the others were, but she'd never met any of them.

I remember walking into the banquet hall, and as we came in Peg Campbell stopped me at the door and said "Are you speaking today?"

I said yes, they'd asked me to say a few words.

"Well I just hope you insult John," she said, "because if you don't he's going to be very disappointed."

My wife looked at me and we went in. I got up to talk and I insulted John in the way he was happy about. My wife said, "She really meant it, didn't she?"

I said, "Yes. This is what he expects."

That's the kind of relationship I had with John Campbell. I never had much interest in Campbell the public figure or the "great white father" as Peg sometimes referred to him. I was more interested in him as a human being. I have memories of the convention in Detroit, me going with Campbell out to Dearborn where Henry Ford had amassed a tremendous collection of artifacts memorabilia of Thomas Edison, the Wright brothers and other inventors and innovators. It was an unforgettable experience, for this man was able to point out things not like a museum guide, but like someone who had an intimate acquaintance with each individual object and its purpose and history. He didn't lecture, he would turn casually to something and our

would come a complete, well-rounded comprehensive encyclopedic history or description of it.

As I say, these memories are personal. But because they're personal I had to take a good long, hard look at the image John Campbell had when he passed away some five weeks ago. I asked myself what has this man meant to our field. To some of the people now entering the field not very much. John Campbell didn't mean very much, I think, to people who feel that in science fiction Michael Moorcock is God, J. G. Ballard is the Son, and Judith Merril is the Holy Ghost. But to those of us who have been around a slightly longer time, Campbell's achievements are quite consequential.

In the period between the late 1930s and the mid 1940s Campbell introduced new concepts into science fiction and a new style of writing. He didn't necessarily discover, but he certainly guided, the work of some of the great names of the field. John Campbell's influence on Robert Heinlein, the early Theodore Sturgeon, Isaac Asimov, Henry Kuttner, Catherine Moore, A. E. van Vogt, and many others was profound and lasting. During the first decade he brought forth and cultivated the talents of more of the all-time greats of science fiction than any other editor in any other time and other place. He did so because he was an innovator, because he had a very, very perceptive, keen intelligence, because he knew how to speculate.

A speculation is a conjecture. Is the moon made of green cheese? Is Andy Warhol an artist? Is Walt Disney really Forry Ackerman's father? Not all speculations are necessarily valid. I think a lot of Campbell's flights of fancy in his editorials were an outgrowth of the speculation he bestowed in the form of story ideas, upon many, many writers. In recent years a new breed of writers came into

the fold of what is now *Analog*. And again Campbell is responsible. Later working closely with authors sometimes even with story ideas. In some cases I suspect he had to do so to get stories we'd have thought complete works confined to lavatory walls.

Now Campbell was one of a group of astute perceptive observers. Behind his hands his pen names his crotchets as perceptive but he limited them nearly at least personally. He's often blamed for the effect this man with his drinking its terms of his world influence. He was over science fiction to a kind of academy. Those days who may doubt what John Campbell was to science fiction merely pose one question to get your head really hard: can one science fiction editor who has brought both more writers has ever had more magazines a greater stature than John Campbell?

Now the other gentleman I wish to speak about is of course Augustus Derleth. I first came into contact with August Derleth in 1938 at which time I was introduced to him by correspondence through the efforts of H P Lovecraft. I didn't meet him for about two years. On an hitchhiking trip I mentioned in previous books I had set out to Sauk City on a bus, coming into this small town seeing this lovely man in his early twenties living in a large rather ordinary wooden farmhouse on a side street of his community wearing a velvet smoking jacket though he didn't smoke. That impressed me.

I was impressed and I was more impressed as years went on by Derleth's prodigality the fact that he wrote far so many books. He was eclectic. He was a poet as well as a novelist fiction he wrote pastiches he wrote detective fiction he wrote regional novels essays commentary all seemingly effortlessly. I discovered that he worked twelve hours a

hours a day and what was left of his time was allocated to various pursuits and hobbies of all sorts. He slept, perhaps five or six hours a night.

All of these things impressed me but I wasn't really aware of the kind of man that Derleth was until our mutual friend Lovecraft died, and Derleth decided that together with Donald Wandrei, his friend from Minneapolis, he was going to launch Arkham House to publish Lovecraft's work.

Now this was in the depression. There were no published works of fantasy with the exception of two anthologies edited by a non-fantasy writer in the United States. The only fantasy books that were published or had been published lately were little English reprints of *Weird Tales* stories called the *Not at Night* series. There were 25 paperbacks. Nobody would touch this material but Derleth was brave and determined that Lovecraft who could not get published by any hardcover firm in his lifetime was going to have his work appear in book form.

So he launched Arkham House. By this time he had built a home of his own, a very handsome home on the outskirts of the village across the street from the local cemetery. I think he liked the idea of having fresh flowers every day. He had some money from a mortgage loan for home improvements. He allocated some of this money toward the publication of the first Arkham House volume, *The Outsider and Others*. He put out twelve hundred copies. The advance price was $3.50, which was outrageous at that time, people and he sold only a few hundred copies in advance of publication. It took him four or five years to sell out the entire edition. Meanwhile, to meet the bills, he put together a collection of his own work published that and put the royalties back into Arkham House. Since then Arkham House has published over a hundred volumes. At one time

has Arkham House been out of the hands of the bankers. There's always been a loan. And every bit of money that's come out of Arkham House has always been ploughed back in so that other writers could be published.

This was a one man operation, something that Derleth took on in addition to his regular 16 hour a day schedule. But as a result Arkham House is responsible for book publication of *Slan* at a time when nobody was touching science fiction in hard covers with a ten-foot pole; it published the first collection of Ray Bradbury, the first collection of Fritz Leiber, the works of many other fantasy writers who otherwise would have been doomed to vanish into obscurity. And eventually, as a result of World War II, Arkham House caught on to a certain extent so other small publishers got into the act. Soon there were a dozen houses issuing and reprinting both fantasy and science fiction. If it hadn't been for Arkham House there is a great possibility that neither science fiction nor fantasy would ever have cracked the hardcover barrier. And it's doubtful if many paperback publishers would have taken the plunge. We owe a great deal today to the fact that Derleth was willing, in memory of a friend, to pledge not only his financial resources, but his physical resources over a period of thirty years.

But this is only a part of Derleth. He was an unusual human being, and during those many years that I lived in Milwaukee I came to know him well. Derleth loved life. He loved good food, good drink, good conversation, music, and many of the things which today are accepted but which were not accepted at that time. In the 1930s Derleth was collecting comics and comic strips. I remember the first time I took Henry Kuttner and Catherine Moore to visit him. We went out to Sauk City and sprawled on the floor of

his large den looking through stack after stack of bound folio-sized volumes of Sunday comic strips dating back to the 1900s. He must have had a room full of those.

He was a great jazz fan, in the days before rock, with a tremendous record library. He also did something that was a little unusual. Today we dress comfortably if we wish; we don't have to wear shoes or neckties. But in the 1930s this was unheard of, if you were to get up before a P.T.A. or teachers' organization or college group as a lecturer. You dressed the part. Not Augie. Augie threw away his tie, put on jeans, an open shirt, sandals, and said, "Like me the way I am."

He was completely natural, completely outspoken. Again, like Campbell, he wasn't perfect. He had the outsize ego that goes with outsize talent. He had no patience with people who were lazy, who were sloppy in their work or in their thinking. And again, like all of us, he had his prejudices, but he always had the courage of his convictions. It was remarkable how, through the years, he managed to keep abreast of every development in writing and editing.

He started out as a regional novelist, but as time went on he became so well known as a publisher that his own writing took a secondary place. There is, of course, a Solar Pons organization dedicated to the detective pastiche of Sherlock Holmes that he created. Some of his work has received a good deal of critical attention. But I'm saying that for the past fifteen years or so August Derleth was a name that was primarily synonymous with Arkham House. And perhaps that is the way he is going to be remembered. If so, it's not a bad way to be remembered, for no man in the field of fantasy contributed more than Derleth did.

To many of you, what I've been talking about is ancient

history much of it occurred before your memory began as many cases before your actual birth. Today there's a new breed of editor. There's a new breed of anthologizer. There's a new type of writer, a new type of story. I think, because of the nature of science fiction and fantasy today, we're not going to see anyone like John Campbell emerge. We're not going to see anyone like August Derleth emerge.

The day of the one-man show, the individualist who is able to implement his thinking and create a new movement all by himself, is, I believe, over with. There are too many commercial considerations. I don't think anyone could start a Arkham House now. I don't think anybody could assume the editorship of a major science fiction magazine and have complete command today because of the influences of the market and distribution which have changed that picture.

But Campbell and Derleth won't be forgotten. There is not a writer today who does not owe a debt of gratitude to John Campbell for elevating the field from Buck Rogers-ism and gimmickry to a higher literary level. There is not a writer today who doesn't owe a debt of gratitude to August Derleth for enabling so many of his fellow professionals to find a certain amount of enduring fame between hardcovers. Now that's a serious note, and I don't want to close that way.

I want to close with a memory of John Campbell sitting in a room, a drink in his hand, laughing at himself and at some of his own ideas with a group of chosen friends and saying, as he so often did, "You know, this is all I ever wish for: to be in a room with people like I don't want to be out there answering those questions and posing in front of a lot of people who think that I'm some kind of authority.

And I think of August walking into my house, wearing

sandals and his open shirt and his big grin saying 'Ya got a drink for a genius? Then take it yourself!' These two were human beings above everything else. They were human beings who, I believe, meant a lot to this field. I remember them fondly, and I hope you will too.

THE PROXY HEAD

The tall young man stalked through the hotel lobby and headed for a door marked MEN.

Once inside the washroom he stood indecisively for a moment, then went over to a cubicle and deposited a nickel.

The door swung open.

He entered, shut the door, listened to the click.

The click echoes a different click — click — click.

The tall young man reached up, removed his wig, and opened the top of his head.

He stood there, concealed in the cubicle, and his long slim fingers worked with the precision of delicate instruments. They made certain adjustments inside his skull, testing and setting and manipulating.

Sonic a little off, he registered. *Tone good but sonic reception poor.* The street-noises tended to knock out the adjustment sometimes. *Change blueprints on next model*, he registered. *Allow wider range of compensation.*

Vibrationary reception worked perfectly though. The orders from the control vessel came through constantly and

with no interference. He knew what he had done, what he was doing, what he must do at all times.

His assortment fingers completed their work inside his cranium. For a final check he pressed the voice box and uttered a few experimental sounds. A rough sigh. The noises echoed in the hollow washroom. Perfect.

Satisfied, he closed the slot in his head and carefully adjusted the wig once more. It was a handsome wig, real human hair, blond and wavy. He didn't know where the Hostiles had acquired it, probably from the ranking expedition last month when they came down to the ocean and picked up those three men. What were they called?

Prospectors. The message came through vibrationary reception immediately. That reassured him. His guardians were with him every minute, watching him and guiding him. They knew men, studied men, and would supply him with whatever information and instructions he needed under any circumstances. They were exactly aware of what he was doing at all times.

Although the Alien volunteers were in the ship a hundred miles up, they would always be with him through the medium of the vibrationary receptor built into his body.

The young man smiled. Rubberized, synthetic epidermal tissue, carefully coated with plastic, responded instantly. The pseudo-lips parted, disclosing the gleaming perfection of false teeth. A soundless mechanism simulated muscular action. The smile, like everything else about the young man, was perfect.

A great surge of confidence came to him through the receptor. The Hostiles were proud of him, proud of their work. And well they might be. Wasn't he entirely their creation? Hadn't they studied human anatomy, duplicated

it perfectly and with utmost cunning. He could go anywhere, do anything and never be suspected.

Never be suspected. That was the big thing. *A spy must be careful.*

That was part of the receptor's work, of course. To be careful for him. He was a mere machine. His consciousness was itself an illusion; actually he was only a highly evolved and complicated sending-receiving-registering mechanism. The combination gave him, in the aggregate, a sort of individuality, but it was neither necessary nor important.

Like the consciousness of men. That wasn't important either. Stupid, imperfect men—how simple it was to deceive them! His creators, up there in the ship, knew just how to do that. Men are easy to fool. You can do anything you please on this planet if you know how.

Last night, when he was dropped, for example—dropped in an adaptation of mankind's own "parachute." He was given no conditioning or instructions, all he had to do was follow the orders and impulses coming through the receptor.

He'd landed in a condition described as—?

Naked. The word was supplied to him immediately (they knew everything, everything).

He landed naked. That is to say, without the customary body-covering. According to the rules of mankind, this was wrong. He'd be noticed. So the receptor sent him into the city under the cover of darkness. Told him how to skulk, to hide, to creep ever so cautiously up to the window of the clothing store on the dark, deserted street. And the receptor guided him so that he used his brand new body to smash the window, smash the sign reading MONEY TO LOAN—WE BUY AND SELL. And he found the clothing, put it on. Mechanical fingers mastered the new intricacies of dressing, of putting on shoes and tying a tie.

That would have looked odd to men at them were one
a wishop — grotesque — frightening.

The receptor interrupted now. *You mustn't frighten them at contact needed. Not unless ordered. You are to be quiet. Do nothing to attract attention. Your duty is to observe and record. That's all. I don't want the dangers.*

Remember the dangers?

It was easy for his mind to translate remember but not process the dangers into realized phenomenon. Rest of there in the receptacle he waited for awareness to come. It came.

Last to be backed was here, the bowl. That was one of the dangers. Water. Water in color and its liquid. His eyes have sensors. His mouth, the aperture at the top, must be protected from moisture. Even dampness would destroy the delicate balance that enabled him to function.

There would be no rain for for seven years. That was known. No danger there. But *we must avoid moisture.*

He looked down at the water in the bowl. It looked so harmless. But it was dangerous. Dangerous to him. Not to the Hostiles. They had no such makeups to have to protect. For *them*, this planet was quite suitable. They had waited and watched and experimented and spied for a long, long time now, until certain that everything would be ideal here.

All that remained was to assess and analyze the present occupants. Mankind. Mankind was many, and the Hostiles were few. The single ship possessed potent power so they could do almost anything, but the sheer weight of number promised victory if mankind provided that mankind was ready to resist.

That was his job now. To record. To know. Next, to assess them, analyze their — *psychology*.

the word came from the receptor together with a complete file of meaning

He would spy on men He would determine or rather, the Hostiles would determine through him, whether mankind would resist a sudden surprise attack Were men aggressive enough to put up determined resistance—or as they presently surmised, would mankind flee from unknown terrors in blind panic?

It would not take long to find out now The ship was up there, ready They were ready And he was ready Ready to go out, to react and record.

He left the cubicle There was water in the outer washroom, but he avoided it He avoided strong lights too, as directed, he had to avoid places and situations where he'd be expected to—what was it?—*eat* and *sleep* Yes, and he must not *touch* anyone or be touched He knew these things, and many more

The receptor guided and directed him It did not furnish explanations until necessary Then explanations and proper reaction patterns were instantly available

Right now, for example, in the pocket of his *waistcoat* was a silver object He had been directed to put it there last night when he broke into the pawnshop He didn't comprehend why He had been given no further instructions or orders Those would come when needed

He walked across the deserted washroom

Then the door opened Two men came in A fat old man and a thin young man (*old* and *young* he knew all about that how to recognize and distinguish all physical types) They looked at him with blank impersonality, almost as if they knew that he was a machine and continued their conversation

The communication came to him

Walk over to them

He walked, his sticking holsterly on the washroom floor.

Put your right hand in your pocket

The hand moved on its errand

Pull out the pistol and display it

The hand came out

Speak as directed, soft voice.

He said, "Put up your hands!"

They looked at him, eyes goggling in sudden shock. The older man said, "Look, he's got a gun." They raised their hands.

Get their money.

The communication told him what *money* was: its purpose and purpose as a medium of exchange in single and multiple denominations. The reply was immediate to him.

And at the same time, the communication directed him to get the money, told him how to search their pockets, how to find wallets and loose change.

He got the money quickly, stood back counting, and some on in case of interruptions. But there were no interruptions. The women stood there breathing heavily, eyes fixed on the gun in his right hand as his left hand moved inside their pockets.

For one paralyzed moment the two humans were standing like machines while he was animate, purposeful, alive. Their roles were reversed.

Something inside his head, observed their reactions and stimulated. The message came: *They are afraid of you. They fear you. This is how you look to men and fear.* And when he came into contact with his calculating fingers touched some stealthy, hidden mechanism located where

a stomach would normally be caught and recorded their respiration rate, their pulse rate, the delicate glandular reactions. This was lost. He would recognize it in the future.

Commands came to him and he carried out orders. He took the men to remove their trousers. He deposited another naked herded them into a cubicle and slammed a shut. He opened the washroom window and dropped the trousers into the outer, empty courtyard.

Then he left the washroom. The money jingled in his pocket, and the bills rustled against his chest. He walked quickly out of the hotel.

It was getting dark. A lengthy astronomical explanation was flashed to him so that he'd understand, and he had duties to perform.

He made a handsome figure as he strode down the street, tall, blond, youthfully erect, walking stiffly and confidently. Men stepped aside as he marched forward, and women turned their heads. A girl remarked to her friend:

"I sure would like to know where they raise guys like that."

But there was no room for humor or irony or any temperament whatsoever. He had duties to perform. They were to *react and record*.

Up above, in the ship, complicated apparatus traced his progress through the streets. A case recorded the sound which was made by his feet. A screen flashed the sight encompassed by his vision. What he heard, the Hostiles heard. What he saw, they also saw. They guided him now.

Something in his chest, where the heart would normally be, pulsed a warning of *Danger*.

They noted it up ahead. He stopped, watching the street before him. He got orders. *Off the street. Dangerous. Hunters count rising. Hurry.*

Yes. His legs moved slowly, and the vision blurred a

br. And now he was nearing the place he was directed to find.

A large, artificially lighted building. Signs on it announcing. He recorded, tasted it and said HOUSTON TONIGHT!

Crowds milling and pushing.

Don't touch anyone. Don't let them touch you.

He was to buy a *ticket*. Automatically he knew what buying was, what tickets were, the entire procedure.

He went to the front of the line and said, "One, please," and pushed the money forward.

He got, in the box office, what was hard to comprehend: *box office*, no data available in the term, but no matter, give him a small piece of cardboard and some change. Tinkled it out of a slot and he stood here waiting until the commentator directed him to pick it up.

Then he went into the arena. Carefully he avoided physical contact with the crowds. Somebody took a ticket, tore it in half, gave him a stub. Somebody else guided him to a seat.

Sit down. People were sitting, here. That was a curious concept although he understood. People had to *eat* and *work* and *exhaust* and *sleep* and *rest*. Their bodies demanded constant care and accommodation. They sat down, they relaxed, they turned off part of their functions and turned on another.

That's what was wrong with people. They were imperfect. Not permanently functional. People became sick and had *accidents* while he, on the other hand, operated perfectly. Eventually. All people *had*. But he wouldn't let anyone turn him off!

Yes, they were weak and imperfect and that was why people would always welcome The Hostiles. Knew. And his job was to control, to watch, to

So he sat there and watched. The lights blazed in the ring, and the announcer bawled and the referee hurried through the ropes. And then two men, naked except for trunks, appeared in corners. *Corners in a ring* — mathematical concept awry in data. Just observe.

He observed. He registered the howling of the humans around him. He registered shrieks and yells, and deep inside he registered the mass aura of the crowd.

The two men in the ring began to hit at one another with gloved hands. One of them started to bleed at the nose. *Blood* meant *injury*. And the crowd, with one great voice, yelled, "Kill him!"

He knew what *kill* meant. It meant what the Hostiles would do when they took over. And here human units paid money, which was valued, to watch two people attempt to kill each other.

He reacted and recorded as the fight went on. Up in the stands they composed. And their compositions reacted him.

These were average specimens of mature humankind. Old, young, male, female, rich, poor. And they were animals, suddenly swayed by fear, hate. Mass impulses gripped them completely. Mass reactions were easily registered. It would not be difficult to instill mass panic into such as these. So far the findings were favorable.

The fight was in the second round, *round* — no date apparently on which any time-in-reverse fan discussed why the signal came for him to leave.

He stood up and made his way out. It was hard to avoid contact with human knees and feet. Eyes stared at him curiously for a moment, then returned to the spectacle in the ring. From over the arena came the registered intensity of mass excitement, of hysteria, of illogical emotional

reaction. It pleased him in the ship. But they were careful. They were going to check further. He had other tasks to perform.

It was still early in the evening when the tall, blond young man entered the street once more. There was no danger as to the mechanisms operating inside the metal shell. The normal was closed, the nostril openings protected. The metallic tubes contracted. All the synthetic bones moved perfectly.

Meanwhile, on the ship, his creators were calculating quickly and constantly upon the basis of his observations. Mature adults, as they styled themselves, would not be a problem—a fear reaction could be properly provoked. There was one danger: an aggressive reaction might be aroused, and then there would be mass resistance. Plans were also made accordingly. But mature adults constituted only a portion of humanity. There were many old people.

Old people—

He was being directed now. Directed to the park. Here in the warmth of an early spring evening, people were strolling. And here was *baby!*

Just in front, he [illegible] caught it and [illegible] caught it. It stepped back from the sidewalk. It moved against the doorway of a building as the huge machine bundled down the street, spraying water against the curbing.

Water-sprinkler. Avoid. Danger.

He was free again. He [illegible] turned into the park path. Old people were here.

Old people, [illegible] and Age and Infirm. They [illegible] the seats, the stone and [illegible] and the world of [illegible] to go [illegible] for the end.

And many of them were clustered around the soap box speaker near the deserted bandstand. He was pouring it on.

He stood close, but not too close. The phrases registered, although the meaning was not clear until the communicators sent along data. Something about "pension plan can't earn a living ... work hard all your life and die in poverty ... wrong system ... legislation ... I'm old and you're old ... what can we do?"

The speaker *was* old, old and ragged. He spoke with fervor, and the fervor was recorded. The crowd of elderly people reacted, and the reaction was recorded. The reaction was that of the two men in the washroom — it was *fear*.

That's what he was looking for — fear. And he felt it there. The old people, all of them, were afraid. Afraid of their future. Afraid of death. *Old people afraid* was duly registered.

And one hundred miles away, one hundred miles straight up, a sort of bodiless glee hummed inside the odd ship.

The Hostiles sent him walking on, then down the street, into the bright lights. Then they put the most delicate of all devices into operation — selective recording apparatus that could beam in on individual passers-by.

It was a mechanical chemical synthesis. It was telepathy and psychoanalysis combined, and raised to the highest power.

All kinds of people, thinking. *Wonder if I will get two weeks notice today for so much sick leave.*

God, but I'm sick and tired of working. Work, work, work ...

Let's see, it's almost the first of the month. Time for the bills ...

What will Peter say when he sees my new hat. He'll murder me ...

Guess I'll stop in for a drink on the way home. I sure need one . . .

All shades of feelings and emotions. Boredom, fatigue, complacency, hope, chagrin, despair, panic, hysteria. And keening through all of it, in wave after wave—fear. Partial awareness, partial functioning, and all because of fear. Everywhere spread fear.

Up in the ship, they had data on fear, data gathered over many months, many years of observation. He wasn't the first spy. They were careful, because there would be only one chance to use weapons, only one chance to strike. It must come, could come at only the exactly proper moment. And the moment was—probably, almost certainly—now.

The data was reviewed, re-evaluated. Surprising data, some of it. Orson Welles' atomic bomb, communism, flying saucers, incidence of psychotic disorder, juvenile delinquency.

The Hostiles checked that source now. Youth. He had another errand to perform. Plans were almost ready to go into operation, but there was this final survey to make. It would be made right now, tonight.

He clattered down the street. The neon lights reflected from his waxy, too-handsome face. His too perfect features, his window dummy smile seemed oddly artificial. But nobody noticed him. Humans took everything for granted; they were completely wrapped up in their own thoughts, their own fears.

Something began to hum audibly, inside his chest, up near the shoulder blades in the back.

The Hostiles sought it. He marched into an alley, groped into a dark, deserted alleyway. A cat saw him and suddenly arched its back, startled, and spat.

Animals were aware. They knew what he was. But that didn't matter. The animals would be destroyed, along with the human animals, when the Hostiles came.

He didn't wonder about what would happen when they came. He knew. They might assume bodies like his, for a while — because those bodies could easily function in the present mechanical pattern of this planet. But once the buildings came down, once the crude human-built machines were replaced by their products of science, old bodies would be discarded in favor of improved ones. He would be discarded, too, of course.

But ... didn't matter. He felt no emotion concerning this because they hadn't provided him with emotion. He could contemplate his own extinction with the same lack of reaction with which he contemplated, now, the extinction of two billion, four hundred and seventy four million human beings and all their animals. Yes, animals: birds, reptiles, and insects. *Balance of Nature data an anthropomorphic myth. New pattern of survival already set up. Human and animal life unnecessary.*

The cat howled and fled. He stood in the darkness and his hands opened the slot in his skull under the wig. A tiny wire had jarred loose. He adjusted it as directed. Everything was so delicate. The slightest jar, the slightest moisture might cause complete malfunction. Dangerous. But only one task more, now, and he could be safely discarded. The Hostiles would come. One task more.

The handsome young man walked out of the alley and headed for the Penny Arcade. It was out near the beach, on a pier.

It was noisy, very noisy. Inside the young man's head the machinery hummed, made minute, instantaneous adjustments in sonic reception.

The lights glared and dazzled. Visitors continued to the glitter

And to begin to react and record

This was the haunt of youth. The young people were all around giggling, laughing, shouting, pushing, shoving. They clapped across the counter of the soda fountain. They put nickels into juke boxes, dimes into automatic games, quarters into self-photographing booths. They held the pages of comic books and magazines.

He registered something on vision that caused the Hostiles to take heed. Some words about science fiction, and a colored picture of a vessel. It was crude, but there was a vague recognizable similarity between the unknown artist's concept and the actual vessel that passed one hundred miles above.

React and Record. There was no fear here. Receptor mechanisms searched for it, but could not find it. Even those were in the arcade on the end of the pier, near the water. The rear of the arcade had a rickety balcony, and the dark water of the lake swirled directly below. But these young people were not afraid.

Of course not. They were human and humans did not dread monsters. But what about the other fears? Illness, poverty, death. The receptors searched.

No. Youth was not afraid.

Upon the ship they calculated. So many millions and so many millions in this particular age group. Physical characteristics thus and so. Enough of a menace to forestall attack. Perhaps. If they were not afraid. But they were human, and the human is susceptible to panic. Particularly when overburdened with unpleasant elements with the unknown. Fear of the unknown. It might be the key. Investigate

They sent him closer to the group at the end of the pier, at the magazine-stand. He stood there quite silently and inconspicuously.

All around him was the noisy neon fantasy of humanity at play. Below the pier was an amusement park where roller coasters swooped and soared and shuddered down, where *papier mâche* monsters goggled in the glitter of torchlight, where fantastically-costumed clowns and freaks grimaced at the crowds. Weird architecture, crazy lighting, and exhortations of barkers blended into a complete illusion of unreality.

And here, too, in the Penny Arcade, where the machines clanged, the air of unreality persisted. Teenagers, in their curious costumes, milled and thronged. Their speech pattern was oddly filled with 'cool' and 'extremely' and 'George' and the later neologisms.

So that he, standing there in his conservative suit, appeared quite normal in contrast — he was, in appearance, utterly real. He was real and the softly sounding waters without were real. There was a feminine dampness in the air and his vision blurred momentarily. Then, the Host-less made some adjustments.

The tall young man walked over toward the group of youngsters near the magazine stand. Their conversation flowed casually, loudly, erratically. Their statements were positive, eager, exaggerated.

No fear. But no menace here either. They were only children in the bodies of near-adults. Bobby socks and blue jeans and leather jackets and beanies formed a pattern of immaturity, of over-emotional self-dramatization.

"Here's a new one." A skinny lad held up the magazine with the space ship on its cover. "Lend me a quarter, Marty. I want to buy this."

Marty wore glasses. He was trying to grow a mustache a beard effect began too soon. "Haven't got it, Dave."

Dave turned to the two girls. "Come on, you two, look over! You come to two bits from before school. Make with the moola, Bea."

The taller of the two girls giggled. "Cool your heels. Ask Pat." The skinny youth went up to the shorter girl and pretended to talk out of the side of his mouth. "Come on, sister — let's see it." He grasped her arm, and she pulled away. His hand went to his jacket pocket, emerged.

For a moment he observer clutched. The youth had a gun. Like his *gun*. But no — the communicator estimated — it was only a toy.

Only a toy. They were children. They knew no fear, but in fact there was no need to fear them. Overgrown children.

Up above, they were satisfied.

The four young people scuffled good-naturedly before the magazine came back. The skinny boy still wanted his magazine. The taller girl protested. "You and your science fiction! All you guys are gone on that kick. You have enough magazines!"

"But it's a new book. I want to see what's in it."

"I'm weeping for you." The magazine went back on the rack.

"Come on, let's see it." Marty grabbed at Dave's beanie and was interfered with the toy gun.

The spy waited, waited for the command to come, waited to go. It was his mission completed.

Instead the communicator ordered him: "*Pick up the magazine.*"

He was lower reached between the scufflers, took the magazine from its place. The Hostages were curious. They wanted his visit to inspect the contents, see what puerile

pseudo science could possibly appeal to these immature minds

'Hey, wait a minute, mister!' The taller girl, Bea, was protesting. 'That's our magazine!'

'Yeah, it's ours. What's the score?' This from the bespectacled Marty.

He did not find words for words were not supplied. He reached in his pocket. *Pay for it. The cashier takes money, over there.*

He turned away without answering. He was quiet, his face was calm, there was no indication of concern.

The boy called Dave grabbed his arm. 'Now, listen, Mister — give us back our magazine.'

He was angry. All four of them were angry, and despite their previous scuffling, suddenly united. Something new was communicated to the receptors — determination.

A signal now came to the spy. *Don't answer. Go away. Quickly.*

But now Marty took hold of his arm. He had to get away, he had to move back. He stepped back cautiously, stopped as the four surrounded him. Dave was waving his little toy gun, and they were all yammering idiotically. Stupid human reactions, but he must be careful.

The message came. *Give them the magazine and get out.*

He raised his hand, extending the magazine. But Pat was excited, angry. She yelled, 'Let him have it, Dave!'

And suddenly Dave leveled his ridiculous, childish weapon.

He pulled the trigger.

A stream of water shot out and hit the handsome young man in the face. It flooded his eyes, entered the opened mouth. He turned — everything was blurred — and as they laughed and shouted, another stream of water caught him

squirrels on the back of the rack. It saturated the wig, trickled through the slot.

So terrific a flash through the receptors but he lost contact. Most static dampness was filtered out. It ceased to function at all forever. His damaged communicator sent out the same message and received none from humans. He wasn't human, he was only a machine, but the message was plain.

Stark, utter fear.

Without rules to govern the Host's new mind sensed. In a moment the computations were revised, conclusions drawn. A course of action chosen. They could attack, but would wait and treat them. And some other pseudo-science soon already would discover the water weapon. No, this was not the time. Accept defeat and go. The cautious vessel, limited suddenly, accelerated to an incredible speed was gone.

On the pier the magazine slipped from a plastic pocket to grip. Instruments hastily rose to cover the dripping face.

The youngsters paid no attention. They beat and screamed at the gravel-voiced man with no thought for the handsome young man. Their attention was easily diverted — they were just like animals. Unimaginable immaturity.

He turned and staggered away. There was a peculiar hatch-shape. He couldn't see. Drops of water were eating away inside his skull. Cilenta disintegrated. Vasto and Scott mingled in a roaring haze of vivid color and sound. Retinas and bowling darkness.

He could only wipe the droplets out of the slot. The Host's sex gone, it was soft and to move. He tried. As he stumbled out of the Penny Arcade into the railing walk of the pier, a youngster caught me as a glimpse of hairy, hairy hands raised and fumbling at the back of his head.

Then he was gone. They didn't see him hit the railing in his blindness, didn't hear the wood give way, didn't hear the splash as he—disordered, discarded machinery—tumbled into the obliterating waves below.

"What was the matter with him?" Dave asked. "I wouldn't of let him have it if I knew he'd take it so big."

"Aw, forget it," Marty counseled. "So you made like Buck Rogers with a zap-gun and he got sore. Some people haven't got any sense of humor."

"Check," said Bea. "And people without a sense of humor aren't human!"

"Yeah." Pat sighed as they turned to open the magazine. He looked like he was ready to blow his top.

THE TRADITIONS OF SCIENCE FICTION AND CONVENTIONS

The Guest of Honor Speech at the 31st World Science Fiction Convention, August 31, 1973

Speaking to you today is like taking a journey

For me, it's a combination of time travel and an ego trip

Twenty-five years ago I came to Toronto's first World Science Fiction Convention as a guest of honor. And now, a quarter of a century later, here I am again, at Toronto's second World Science Fiction Convention — as a guest of honor.

In one way it's very gratifying. But in another it's a little discouraging. I just don't seem to have made any progress.

Of course many things have changed during that time — and I'm one of the things. In 1948 I was thirty-one years old — the youngest professional writer ever to be guest of honor at any Worldcon. And today, I'm one of the oldest.

In 1948 when I first came here there was no such thing as a Royal York Hotel. Even the name was unthinkable — for in those days no Canadian was willing to admit that royalty ever yorked. Most of the yorking that

went on at that convention was done by the fan guest of honor, Bob Tucker.

Today, your fan guest of honor is William Rotsler. And I'd like to take this opportunity to tell you just how happy I am about this. Over the years, the Worldcons and the world of science fiction have honored many famous fans, and justly so. We have recognized Forry Ackerman for the way in which he has promoted such monsters as Dracula, Godzilla, the Wolf Man, and Jim Warren. We have hailed Sam Moskowitz for his autobiography *The Immortal Storm*. We have paid homage to Harry Warner, Jr.—science fiction's foremost man of letters. But during all this time no one has made a greater contribution to fandom than William Rotsler. Quietly, modestly, and above all, generously, Bill has contributed literally thousands of pieces of artwork to fanzines, his creations have been bestowed on neo-fans as well as the big names. There are few fanzine publishers who do not have reason to be grateful to Bill Rotsler—and certainly every reader owes him a debt of gratitude. I'm very pleased that a small portion of that debt is being repaid here, at long last. I am also pleased that Rotsler is finally emerging in professional publication with samples of his writing ability, which have heretofore only surfaced in the pages of fan magazines. He is truly one of our finest versatile talents—and I am doubly honored to share this occasion with him.

In the presence of such protean ability, I'm a bit puzzled as to why I am privileged to appear here at all.

To begin with, science fiction is youth-oriented, and I'm an old man. I didn't think so yesterday, but there was a party last night and I'm an old man now.

Actually, I don't have the qualifications for the guest

of honorable. Unlike the leading writers of science fiction today, I don't even have an entourage.

You all know what an entourage is. An entourage is a group of people who say to themselves, "If I hang around this guy long enough, maybe he'll put my story in an anthology."

Nor am I one of those writers with charisma—the kind who causes every head to turn automatically when he enters a room while people exclaim in hushed whispers, "Hey, look—here comes what's-his-name!"

I have never been that kind of writer who could go to New York, have lunch with the editors, and come away with contracts for seventeen books. The last time I went there I had lunch by myself at an Orange Julius stand. And Julius made me bring my own orange. The only contract I have out on me is from the Mafia.

I have never won a Nebula Award, and I can't afford to buy one. There is only one Hugo Award on my shelves.

You've been to Silverberg's house? The place looks like a pawnshop with a bed in it.

Unlike many of my colleagues, I don't get big fees for going around lecturing to students at universities—in fact, I seldom use such language when I speak.

And when you get right down to it, I'm not really a science fiction writer at all. Over the years my work has been published in many science fiction magazines, but almost everything which appeared has been fantasy.

Of course this doesn't necessarily disqualify me, because quite a number of authors accepted by the field have been fantasy writers. Edgar Rice Burroughs and Robert E. Howard, for example. H. P. Lovecraft and Clark Ashton Smith come to mind, and C. L. Moore. When you come

right down to it, Richard Matheson is a fantasy writer and so are Ray Bradbury and Theodore Sturgeon.

So perhaps that's one of the first traditions of science fiction conventions—fantasy writers are treated with as much dignity and respect as a genuine Trekkie.

And that I believe is a tradition we can all be proud of—the tradition of democracy.

Social historians haven't gotten around to the study of science fiction conventions. But when they do they'll discover a rare phenomenon. Our conventions first began forty years ago and, from the very beginning, they have always been ahead of their time because they cut across all artificial distinctions of economic status, race, or creed. The only caste system we recognize is one based on achievement.

Even if that achievement happens to consist of self-advancement.

We have just five major divisions in science fiction. Neofans—big name fans—hacks—pros—and J. G. Ballard.

In my time I have been a member of four of those divisions. If I'm lucky, some day I may even make the fifth—I'm waiting for word from the Pope right now.

I've told you in all truthfulness that I don't really have the qualifications for guest of honor. I do not write pure science fiction and I'm too old to write impure science fiction. I can't make the sort of impressive speech you're accustomed to hear from notables like Poul Anderson, Clifford Simak, Ben Bova, Frederik Pohl, Larry Niven or Sprague de Camp.

I have speculated why the Convention Committee assigned me the topic of *The Traditions of Science Fiction and Conventions*. For this at least, perhaps I have certain credentials. Over the years, long before the time of many of

you, I wrote for fanzines. Some of that writing has been collected in hardcovers in what I believe was one of the first professionally published book of fan magazine articles, *The Eighth Stage of Fandom*. I conducted a column on fan magazines in the prozine *Imagination* during the 1950s, during which time I read 18,973 Harry Warner letters and looked at 47 000 Rotsler illustrations, including two clean ones. I wrote one of the first professionally published science fiction stories *about* fandom, in *Fantastic Universe* and one of the first professionally published articles about fandom, in *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*. I have actually attended fifteen World Science Fiction Conventions—and at one of them I was sober.

That is probably the second tradition of science fiction conventions.

The third, and to me the most important, is the symbiotic relationship between fans and pros. Symbiosis has been the single constant which has held conventions together over all the years. And with good reason.

To begin with, let's start by stating the premise that most of today's pros were yesterday's fans. So many of us began in an amateur capacity—writing, illustrating, editing or publishing fan magazines. And it was at conventions—Worldcons such as this, or regional affairs—that many of us first made personal contact with the professionals in the field. As a result, there's this strong feeling of equality which I alluded to before—a feeling which is really a carry-over from the days when convention attendance was limited to two or three hundred people and there was ample opportunity to get together with one another.

Today, however, there is a growing feeling that a gap exists between fandom and prodom, and—let's be honest about it—a certain resentment of the fact.

Yet fact it is, and we must accept it.

Today as we all know conventions have grown into great social affairs. No longer do we have just a few hundred attendees who all came in one car. I came over three hundred people in the ladies washroom alone. The reason I was there is because the men's washroom was too crowded for me to get in.

I have no figures on the number of people who are expected to show up here during the weekend but I recently saw that the sheer volume of fans is causing some interesting situations. For example, somewhere at the conference today is Darlene (get-lemmings-off-a-cliff) J. Vernon Shea. Here is a man who was a member of the Lovecraft Circle — a lifelong fan, and a professional ufologist and Fortean writer with whom I have known for many years. And right now I am wondering just how we're going to manage to find each other in this crowd and during this busy convention schedule. Just as I wonder how I had so many readers with whom I've corresponded who have been gracious enough to send me their fanzines. There has been a great deal of talk about conventions, excessive commercialism, cliques — with at least a shaky sufficient awareness that the very size of today's affairs can be a major obstacle to personal communication.

Those of us who have been around over the years have learned to accept this, but I'm hopeful that some of the newcomers will realize the problem too.

Realistically, there are certain limitations I have said that fans of the prozines tend their careers as fans. But if they have a real interest in writing and fandom they would have a chance to talk to some of the professionals — to whom they can appear as a fan and not

Why is it that some pros are active fans and others are aloof?

Again we come back to the fundamental fact—a writer has nothing to sell but his time.

Paradoxically, a part time writer has more time for fan activity than a full time writer. Even if he moonlights from a regular job he can afford to indulge in fandom because he's not dependent on his writing for a living. He is less apt to take on assignments involving hasty deadlines—and is less concerned about meeting them. So the part time pro has a better opportunity to function fannishly than his full time colleague—unless his full-time colleague has some independent source of income.

Along with the time factor we've got to consider the matter of physical endurance. As a general rule the younger writers have more stamina than the older ones. Any bartender can tell you that. So can some fen fans.

Now we come to another paradox. The more fans a writer has the less time he has for them. Robert Heinlein won't write for fanzines—if he started he'd be inundated with requests for material. Arthur Clarke was forced last year to prepare a form letter in order to answer fan correspondence.

Another thing we're inclined to forget—writers have their individual idiosyncrasies. Some writers just don't enjoy being letterhacks while others keep up a large correspondence. Some writers are lousy critics. Some critics are lousy writers.

As for face-to-face confrontation at a convention like this, let us remember that not all writers are equally at ease as speakers, panelists or even in social situations with strangers. Some writers are shy—others are Extroverted Boys.

There is also the matter of the generation gap. In the early days of fandom and science fiction conventions it seemed

that almost everybody was roughly in the same age-group. Aside from Doc Smith and a few others, the writers, artists, even the editors were scarcely more than half a dozen years older than most of the fans. This made social contact much easier all around.

But time passed — the writers got older, and all the while new, younger fans kept arriving on the scene. To complicate the situation still further, today we have many new, younger writers with a totally different frame of reference.

So the gap widens. Because of the very real differences which do exist — in terms of time, energy, and attitude — we must learn tolerance. The young fan who puts down the old pro is making a grave error; twenty years from now he may be hooked on Gertrude himself. And the old pro who turns his back on young fans is really rejecting himself as he was twenty years ago.

The only group that can really bridge this gap consists of the editors. Editing is the one pro activity where a writer can earn a living by maintaining full contact with fans. An editor is not necessarily well paid for his work, but communication is a part of his job. What he writes in his magazine or in a fanzine, or in editorial introductions to anthologies, is essentially a sales promotion. Maintaining relationships is his profession. But even here, a truly professional editor must consider a wider audience and cater to other tastes than those of fandom alone. The mature fans and the mature pros recognize this and accept it. As for the less mature, again it is necessary to maintain our traditions of tolerance.

Anyone familiar with the history of science fiction fandom knows that there was never really a time when the lion lay down with the lamb in the Garden of Milford. Even fandom was plagued with feuds, political differences, power plays, and Donald A. Wollheim. But fandom has

survived and flourished because most of us have made a genuine and continuing effort to find common ground in a common interest.

And there are some things in which we can make a common cause today, whatever our ages and backgrounds may be. For example, there's the necessity of presenting a united front against censorship.

Science fiction has come a long way from its early preoccupation with gadgetry and hardware. Gone are the days when we got excited over books like *Tom Swift and His Electric Nose-Picker*. Today many of us pride ourselves on improvements of style and choice of themes; we feel that science fiction is no longer a genre but a recognizable part of the mainstream of literature. In fact, there are some who claim we *are* the mainstream. But if so, we will have to face the problems of the mainstream—and that's where censorship comes in.

When I speak of censorship, I'm not talking about mere attitude. If some aspects of today's science fiction are distasteful to various political groups, educational bodies, or religious organizations, so be it; they are entitled to their opinions and they are at liberty to express criticism.

What concerns me—both as a writer and a reader—and what should concern all of us—is not expression but *suppression*. The actual effort to exclude and eliminate science fiction as something antisocial, immoral, and full of cholesterol.

For example, banning science fiction from public libraries. Almost a century has passed since certain misguided zealots managed to bar Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* from library shelves on moral grounds. And yet today some librarians are at it again—and this time science fiction is one of their targets, in certain localities.

Now I'm not questioning the honesty of their motives or the librarians' judgment that I don't trust librarians. I've found that people who make more of a fuss if a book is overdue than they would if the same were true of a girl-friend.

I am willing to concede that librarians feel a certain obligation to safeguard the young from excessive vulgarity. But I think it's going a little too far when you insist on changing an author's name to something like Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.—or Isaac Reat-endanov.

So I think all of us in science fiction must share the burden of continuing the battle against arrogant and arbitrary censorship.

And we can't rely on the critics to do our fighting for us. The so-called serious critics have always had a very poor batting average when it comes to estimating the value and viability of literary output. When I entered the professional field back in 1931 the major critics ignored or dismissed the work of such "pulp hacks" as H. P. Lovecraft while devoting their serious attention to significant and important writers like Conrad Richter, T. S. Stribling, and Evelyn Waugh. They voted the Pulitzer Prize to Caroline Miller for *Lamb in His Bosom*. Well, I was young and naive and I thought perhaps they'd just made a mistake—Lovecraft would win next year. But in 1935 the Pulitzer Prize in literature went to—you guessed it!—a book called *Now in November*, by Josephine Johnstone. Run down to your favorite bookstore or newsstand and try to find these immortal volumes today. But the ignored and despised Lovecraft is there.

The pundits of certain critics are not infallible either. Again in 1934 and 1935 they were beating the drums for *Jurgen*, by James Branch Cabell, and for Lloyd C. Douglas's *Green Light*

Since then *Anthony* has suffered adversity and the *Green Light* has burned itself out — but people are still reading and enjoying Robert E. Howard and C. L. Moore.

So I've come to the conclusion that Chronos is the real critic. Only time will tell — and the true test of writing is survival.

That is why our field is important. It's the fashion nowadays for people to say that the short story is dead. This is understandable, if they read The New Yorker. But those people are mistaken. I say that the short story is alive and well, and living in science fiction.

Now I've stood up here and issued a plea for tolerance and understanding. I've criticized the critics for not appreciating science fiction. And it's a great temptation to let it go at that — to leave you with the impression that I am a person above prejudice, above petty preferences — that I have no opinions or convictions of my own — and that my sole aim in life is to play Mr. Nice. But the truth of the matter is, I'm as biased and bigoted as the next fellow — and we all know what a slob the next fellow is.

So at the risk of offending some people, I'm going to be honest and state some of my personal likes and dislikes in the science fiction field today.

There are certain writers whose lifestyle I look upon with amazement, or at least a lack of understanding. I have never, for example, been particularly thrilled by the writer who decides he's some sort of super Renaissance man — the kind who regards himself as talented in all fields — like Leonardo da Vinci, only better.

You know the kind I mean. He not only wants to paint The Last Supper — he wants to cook it and serve it, too. And pass out the after-dinner mints.

I am also suspicious of another type — the writer whose

title is longer than his story. I tend to back away from any short story with a title that sounds like the name of a bad rock group.

In my prejudiced opinion, this smacks of pretension—and to me pretension is the enemy of good writing. Authors are often accused, and sometimes rightly so, of writing not for their readers but for the movies. I think it's just as bad to go off to the other extreme and write for the critics.

I do believe in experimental writing. I think experiment is healthy. But as a student of science I must remind you that the word 'experiment' is not necessarily a synonym for 'success'. If you watch the Late Late Show on television it may be that you have seen an old film called *Dr. Ehrlich's Magic Bullet*. In which case you know that Dr. Ehrlich conducted six hundred and five unsuccessful experiments before he came up with 606 for the treatment of syphilis. Let us all remember this lesson—some experimental stories have the magic formula, but others are just diseased.

In a way, of course, every story is an experiment. Reduced to simplistic terms, all fiction—of whatever kind or length—consists of just two ingredients: form and content.

This is a fairly recent discovery for most science fiction writers and their readers. As a result they sometimes tend to hail an innovation in form as something new and daring, when in actuality it is borrowed from so-called mainstream work written years ago. The same is true of content. Science fiction is a late comer to areas of subliminal impression and sexual fantasies.

Nor does one have to be a member of the New Generation in order to qualify as an experimental writer. The two most consistently bold and trail-blazing authors in science fiction have been pioneering for twenty years—and surely all of us know what a tremendous debt we owe to Fritz

Leiber and Philip Jose Farmer. Leiber for form—Farmer for content.

Finally, I must take issue with a notion held by certain fan critics who seem to deplore the fact that science fiction is reaching a larger public and gaining acceptance. They're afraid this is going to spoil the quality of the authors' work. There is a certain school of thought which says that in order to advance the cause of literature, the writer must suffer.

Now, I don't hold with this at all. I've always felt that if anybody's got to suffer, let it be the reader.

One more thought on the subject of our changing times.

'Standards have vanished! Wickedness triumphs! All virtue and justice are gone! The world is degenerate!' So said our fathers, and thus we repeat today. And so shall be the voice of our children!"

No, that's not Sam Moskowitz speaking. A man named Seneca said it, in Rome, two thousand years ago.

That's probably where Sam Moskowitz heard it.

Now Seneca was a philosopher—and like many philosophers, he took a dim view of this world. Today's philosophers seem generally inclined to take an equally dim view, and so do many of today's writers. If they are so-called mainstream writers, their view is apt to be not only dim, but narrow. Because they are limited to the present. Even their fantasy is based directly on present day reality.

Here's where science fiction writers—and readers—have an advantage. They are not confined to the present; they can examine the past and explore the future. They are not limited by time or space, or the perception of five senses.

In 1948, when I spoke at the first World Science Fiction Convention ever held in Toronto, the world seemed a vastly different place to the majority of its inhabitants. The use

of atomic power was just beginning television was in its infancy supersonic flight was a pioneer venture The analysis of the DNA pattern, the everyday employment of the laser beam, the concept of organ transplants the technique of carbon dating the emergence of the computer all these matters and many more were foreign to a race which had lived on this planet for millions of years with never descending more than a few hundred feet beneath the surface of its seas or rising more than a few miles above its land area.

In 1948 the average individual would have scoffed at the notion that in less than twenty five years a man with a heart transplant could sit down in front of a television set in his own home and see other men actually landing on the moon

The average citizen would have scoffed—but not the writers or the fans of science fiction We've been doing it for many decades all this and much more We lived in the space age when most of our fellow human beings were still riding streetcars

Only now is the scientific establishment beginning to explore expound and expand upon matters which were known to every teen age reader of the once despised pulp magazines out there in the huckster room

It's only since the first Toronto Convention here that the scientists are confirming what we have speculated upon from the start Archeologists and anthropologists have revised their estimates of mankind's past tenure on this earth many times over during this brief span between the two Toronto Conventions And astronomers and physicists have similarly revised their concepts as to the age of the earth itself and of the known universe Engineers and technologists have transformed their techniques and at

transforming our lives in the process, for better or for worse. And the space age which we persistently predicted while orthodox authorities sneered is here today.

Yesterday's fantasies have become today's realities. And today's realities will ride in the face of tomorrow's triumphs—or terrors.

Does that mean that science fiction itself is doomed? When reality catches up with speculation will it become dated?

I say the dream will never die—as long as we still have our dreamers. The men and women who write and who read science fiction.

For some years now I've been advocating that science fiction shift its focus of interest from outer space to inner space—move from an exploration of the *universe* beyond man to the universe *within* man. This is presently happening in our field. And along with it, parapsychologists and physicists are turning their attention to the same area. Once again we are the fools who rush in where the establishment angels fear to tread—and this time they seem less reluctant to follow in our footsteps. Science fiction still has a function to perform—to point the way not just to the stars but to our own psyches.

Let's not lose our perspective here. The bulk of science fiction will continue to be written—and read—for entertainment, for escape, for enjoyment, rather than education. It will be written—and sold—for money, and much of it will be hack work. But the best of it will continue to contain elements of invention, imagination, and innovating intelligence to stimulate the intellect of readers and challenge the concepts of science itself.

And that is the greatest tradition of science fiction.

There's some more tradition I haven't mentioned, and that is the tradition of this convention.

Science fiction conventions are for fun. We gather together from all over the world in the spirit of friendship and mutual interests to enjoy ourselves the way friends should when they get together.

Like all friends we have our differences of opinion, our disputes, our disappointments and disagreements. Not all of us are interested in the same facets of convention programming, not all of us share similar tastes — but in the final analysis we are bound together by the fannish tradition. Perhaps you haven't found the convention very entertaining yet — but once this speech is out of the way, there's no reason why you shouldn't have a good time.

I have said that science fiction is the only field which considers all aspects of temporal existence — yesterday, today and tomorrow. When I said it, I was speaking primarily as a professional writer. Now for a moment, I'd like to speak of it as a fan.

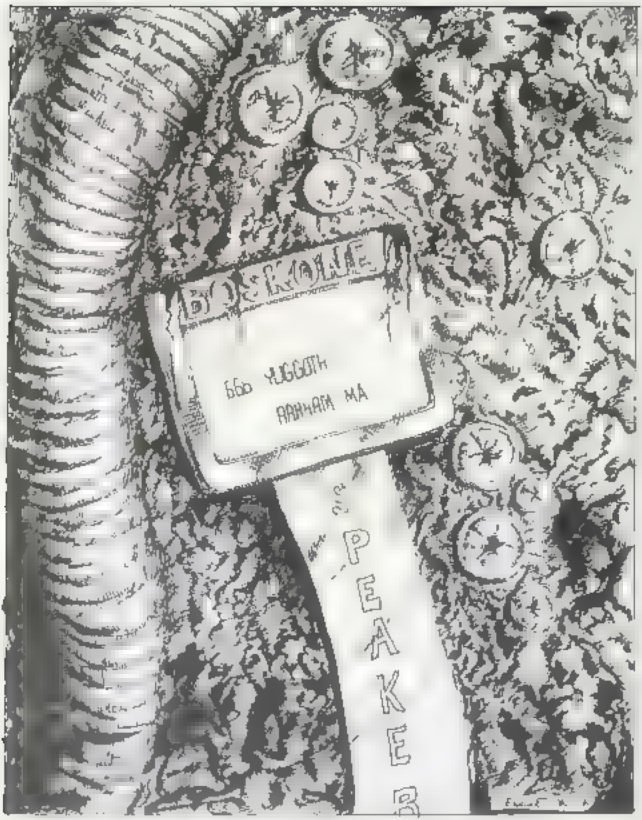
It is my privilege to have been a part of science fiction's past. And that past contains for me many warm and wonderful memories. It was my great good fortune to have known many of the gifted and gracious people who are gone but not forgotten. I think of Vernon McCain, Ron Hilik, Don Ford, E. E. Evans, Dale Tarr, Ted Carnell — who lived, I'm sure, loved fandom and contributed so much of themselves to it. I think of the many writers who were a part of the fannish phenomenon — Hugo Gernsback, H. P. Lovecraft, Clark Ashton Smith, David H. Keller, Stanley Weinbaum, Ralph Milne Farley, Rog Phillips. I remember Henry Kuttner, Carl Kornbluth, Anthony Boucher, E. E. Smith, Charles Beaumont, Willy Ley, John W. Campbell, August Derleth, Fredric Brown, and the others who meant so much to us — not just as fellow-professionals but as friends. I'm proud to have shared the past with them.

And I'm humble to share the present here today. To be the guest of honor at this Convention is a rare and rewarding experience — it is something that cannot be bought, bargained for, or won in competition; something you have bestowed upon me, something which will never be forgotten by me in the future.

As for the future — that too I hope to be able to share with my fellow fans and my fellow professionals for a long time to come. But I can never hope to own it.

From somewhere in this audience today — somewhere amidst all the young people here — will come the fresh talent, perhaps even the genius, of the future — the artists, editors, writers. A new Orwell, a new Huxley, a new H. G. Wells.

Tomorrow belongs to you.


ВЪЗКОЛИЕ
РЕАКЕ

THE RETURN OF LEFTY FEEP

The first person I saw when I walked into Jack's Shack was Lefty Feep.

I recognized him immediately, and I was half way out the door again when he called me back. He said, then, and I quote, "Come in and sit a spell. Any room there would certainly have killed Lane, or anyone over five feet five in height — and greeted me with relish, which spilled out of the sandwich he was devouring.

"Slip me the grub," he commanded. "Let the finger linger! Long time, no. *Sit!*"

"Lefty Feep!" I sighed. "What brings you here?"

"I just stop in for a bite," he told me. "Can you lend me —"

Same old Lefty. I sighed again. Then I glanced at him closer. "Wait a minute," you're *not* the same as you! Where did you get that badge?" I reached out to grasp it, but Feep twisted his head away.

"Not so much with the touch and clutch," he warned me. "This is a souvenir I got at a Convention."

"Convention?

[illegible] Scrooge. Bah, humbug. Don't tell me you are grateful?

Bob? Sure, when I'm down to bedrock and scrounging for [illegible]

Sure, when I was a kid. But I'm not a kid anymore. I'm not [illegible] Gee, Jack. Do you remember that great *Fantastic Adventures?*"

Yes, but I'm not sure I'm ready to answer that question right [illegible]

Why do you think Jesus Christ dug up those old [illegible] bones? Because, ever since Doc Smith's an inborn

So you see, I'm the Scrooge. I've got to get over it.

Next time I'll be Scrooge. I'm going to [illegible] the Worldcon. You want to hear how it is to go around the Worldcon in eighty daze?"

"No," I said, firmly.

But not before I'm totally [illegible] by [illegible] what I've swaggered [illegible] and [illegible]

I walk around the Alexandria Hotel, a little [illegible] time. Escape again. There was a big sign over the door which says SLOTHIGAYE IN HIYTEY NIGHT so I know Rick Sneary's already here. He passes, [illegible] I get to the [illegible] quotation marks hanging in the air, then continued

[illegible] I'm not [illegible] with this room [illegible] but I get my bearings and also a room. The Alexandria is an [illegible] one—one of those [illegible] that [illegible] keeps putting Gernsback down the elevator shaft.

I [illegible] room, start to unpack, but just as I pull the [illegible] out the phone makes [illegible]

Hello. This is Ron Ellik. Can I come up for a minute? Okay."

Two minutes after this conversation there are five fans and a case of warm beer in my room. There is also a lot of Elliott Ness going on because this is the smoke-filled room but since the management does not provide ashtrays we use the fan with the biggest mouth. Finally, around one a.m., we empty the ashes out of Falk's mouth and I go back in the sack.

The next morning—which they call Tuesday, in California—I cut out for Ackerman's house with Dave Kyle and spend the afternoon admiring Ackerman's science fiction collection and Ruth Kyle, though not necessarily in that order. While Dave brushes the cat tracks off his wife we talk with Barbara Silverberg and her husband, whose name I do not catch. Then seventeen fans show up and we make the scene in Pacific Palisades where Mark Clifton is talking at a salon. I ride out in a car piloted by Helen Urban and sit next to a sensitive fannish type name of Miriam Dyches. I can tell she is a fan because she is knitting a bra made out of two propellor beanies.

The woman who runs this salon has her grips on the chips," the chick informs me. "Every Tuesday night she hands a bash for the mink-and-vermin crowd, featuring guest celebrities. Why one night she even has Maureen O'Hara's brother."

I am properly impressed, but even more so when we arrive and find a parking place behind about $250,000 worth of Detroit iron. We approach a large mansion set behind a charming border of money trees and are greeted at the door by a collar-ad lad who seats us on the terrace. Fortunately our hostess has an extremely large patio.

She is a gal of about 60 odd and reminds me of Spring Byington's mother.

After the bash we end up in a Pizzatorium in Hollywood

and Gordon Dewey and his wife drive me back to the hotel. It is then that I discover just how much our hostess is, when I am told she is married to the young collar-and-tie.

Wednesday I meet and greet. I spend time with Bob and Sadie Steers, Boyd Rayburn, and see Anna Sinclair Moffat, who I really connect on Monday when I arrive and have dinner at their place with her kids and find Rick Sneary.

I am surprised to see her in the hotel all dressed up and tells her so. "Where's your pail?" I inquire. "How come you are not making with the mop?"

"What do you mean?" Anna asks. "Why should I be down here with a pail?"

I expect it. I tell her ever since I got a letter from Rick Sneary. He tells me you are the Charwoman of this Convention.

Laughing heartily at Sneary's spelling, she cheers me over. She heads with a gavel and disappears into the bar and I go off to supper with Tony Boucher and his family. I know Tony Boucher lives in Berkeley and am afraid not to ask questions about Berkeley Landon, but he does not dare talk about such things in front of his wife and kids.

Thursday I meet and eat with Earl Kemp, the Chicago mob, the Detroit hoods, and a New Zealand fan named Mike Hinge — who I naturally recognize by his garb. I also run into Ron Bennett, the TAFF representative from England. I think he is a real swinging cat, but of course I do not get a chance to talk to him since he does not bring an interpreter. In the hour-and-a-half lunch is with Daugherty and I also see Karen Anderson and her husband, whose name I forget. That is the evening of the hundred and fifty fans show up at Ackerman's where he is holding open house.

Before I can help myself I just about talk the sensitive Finnish face on Southern California and sitting around on

their sensitive Spanish features. Charles Burbee shows up and starts huckstering watermelons. Gertrude M. Carr delivers the Gettysburg Address, and Roberta Gibson shows up with her husband, whose name I forget.

The next day the Convention opens and I see Walt Liebscher and A. E. van Vogt and Ross Rocklynne and Fritz Leiber. Also Honey Wood Graham and her husband whose name I never do learn. There is a big tea drinking contest where everybody has to stand at table and slurp down the stuff without going to the washroom. The trick is to eliminate the contestants without eliminating the tea. The winner is a chick name of Djinn Paine, who gargles twenty three cups in an hour and seventeen minutes, after which I am somewhat disappointed, since I know she can do much better on account of I see her drink forty four cups in rehearsal just a little while before.

The Convention itself is all fun and games. I meet Ruth Matheson and Peg Campbell and Es Cox and lots of other types, and three beards name of Rousler, Ray Russell and Ted White. I go to more parties than you can strike a cocktail at.

I get my right hand stuck in a sticky machine. John W. Campbell is using as a substitute for flypaper, and my left hand caught in Ed Wood's mouth. Fortunately I don't get bitten as Ed Wood never closes his mouth once during the whole Convention. I listen to the President of the Arch Oboler Fan Club, who turns out to be Arch Oboler, and I see Ray Bradbury and Charles Beaumont and Jerry Bixby telling Terry Carr he can never be a writer because his name doesn't begin with a B. I get curious about the future, so Djinn Paine sticks out her tongue and I read the tea leaves. I watch Berkeley Fandom turn out a fanzine on the only mimeo in the world with a bongo drum attachment.

All of this excites and delights me and I do not wish to leave California ever again. Unfortunately I get a rush telegram calling me to a meeting in Washington. It's from a Mme. Eisenhower, the name of whose husband I forget—

Now hold it just a moment," I interrupted.

I *am* holding it," Deep retorted. "It's all the secret from Dimm Eisenhower he was drinking contest—"

Ike's drinking contest?" I shouted. "Why you weren't even there. It's so I guess I was a judge at his contest along with Poul Anderson."

Who? I never hear the name."

No?" I shouted. "And I suppose you never heard of Bob Silverberg and Ray Philips and Joe Gibson and Richard Madison and Les Cole and all these others. Any more than have or I ever heard of you at the Solacon. Because you actually didn't attend. Did you now?"

Of course I attend," Deffy Deep insisted. "Maybe the reason you do not hear of it is on account of I use my famish pseudonym."

Famish pseudonyms?" I asked. "What is it?"

Carl Brandon," said Deffy Deep.

LEFTY FEEP AND I

The postcard read:

> Dear Bob:
>
> May I suggest a short, reminiscent article for *SFR* entitled "Lefty Feep and I"? I'm sure the readers would love some humorous and informative anecdotes about the dear old pulp days, with some idea of the cold hard reality.
>
> Hopefully,
> Dick

All right. Now you know who's responsible. If there's to be any bitching in the lettercol, be sure that it's addressed to the proper party—not to me, but to Hopeful Dick.

As for me, I have no choice in the matter. Rather than risk offending a publishing giant, I will tell all about the cold hard pulp days and the dear old reality, or whatever it says on the card. I know enough about psychology not to tangle with schizos who carry on dialogues with themselves in

editorials. It's bad enough to have one guy after you, let alone two.

So, now: Lefty Feep and I.

Taking the two of us in reverse order, I was born in 1917. Lefty Feep was born in 1935, and I was not his father. The little bastard was created by my friend, Harold Gauer, and first appeared in the pages of *Brutal — The Magazine for People.*

Now, it is possible that there are those among you who have not seen or read *Brutal*. I am willing to make such allowances because 1936 happened a long time ago, and besides there was only one copy of the magazine. It was knocked off on the then newly published *Esquire* and it was written, edited, typed, photo-inserted, illustrated, bound, and gagged by Gauer and myself. I haven't seen the zine for many years, and since it reposes in Gauer's library in Milwaukee I can't consult it, but as I recall he invented the Lefty Feep name as a story by-line or as the name for a character in one of his contributions.

I do know, however, that Lefty Feep *was* a character and a prominent one in a novel which Gauer and I subsequently collaborated on for our own amusement during the following year. This epic, never intended for or submitted for publication, was a big step forward from the one-copy *Brutal*, because we not only revised it but did it with a carbon copy. As a result I do possess the complete manuscript of *In the Land of the Sky-Blue Ointments*, which features the somewhat Rabelaisian adventures of Lefty Feep, Floyd Scotch, Bishop Shapiro, F. Gregory Copperphil, and the various delegates to the Sexual Congress who recount their sagas in a Decameron-type fashion. Feep appears in the portions written by Gauer, in the guise of a rather uncouth writer, and aside from

his name there's nothing to connect him with his later incarnation in my own stories. But in later years "Omnivents" proved a seminal source for many of the Lefty Feep stories inasmuch as it provided me with character names devised by both Gauer and myself. I was never able to utilize any of the plot material save for a single excerpt which I took from my own section, revised slightly for the necessary updating of topical references, and — under the title "The Traveling Salesman" — sold, over twenty years later, to *Playboy*. This is definite proof that (a) I was twenty years ahead of my time, or (b) *Playboy* was twenty years behind the time, or (c) both.

But we were talking about Feep. That is, I was talking about Feep and you weren't listening. Quit scratching yourself and pay attention.

In 1941 *Unknown Worlds* published a first person humorous yarn of mine, "A Good Knight's Work," written in the then popular style of the late Damon Runyon — not to be confused with Damon Knight, who is confused enough already. Its sequel, "The Eager Dragon," appeared in *Weird Tales* after *Unknown Worlds* had folded. But by that time I'd already combined the Feep name with the first person humorous style and started a series for *Fantastic Adventures*. In the face of all this, is it any wonder Damon Knight gets confused?

Now we come to the dear old role, hunger, life of the pulp days. Briefly put, a guy could starve to death. Particularly if he wasn't living in New York, where he could get acquainted with editors and publishers and thus obtain both information on current market demands plus immediate assignments, to say nothing of cash advances on work as yet unwritten. Virtually all of the successful pulp writing came writers lived in or around New York, and the few

exceptions visited the city regularly to fraternize with editors.

Fraternize was a word we used in the Thirties which has since been replaced by the phrase "bending down drunk."

Like many a marginal Midwestern writer, I bemoaned the fact that I'd come in publishing circles ever picked up the phone and called to say, "Hey, we gotta 6,000 word novel to fill in the next issue of *Captain Future*. You wanna knock something out for us by Friday?" On the other hand, like my fellow-members of Midwestern marginalia, I didn't want to live in New York. Particularly since I'd recently married and settled down. Way down, as it turned out, by 1942.

It was then that I bethought myself of Raymond A. Palmer, who for several years had been editing *Amazing Stories* and *Fantastic Adventures* out of Chicago. Ray, a fellow member of the Milwaukee Engineers, had occasionally nudged me into contributing science fiction yarns in the past, but I'd been recalcitrant about sending material to him. I had a thing about "fraternizing," and felt that a personal relationship shouldn't be used for business purposes — no wonder I was starving.

Anyway, as it's always been the case with me, the worse things got the more I felt impelled to write slapstick comedy material, when things got bad enough, I sat down one day and wrote the first Lefty Feep story, "Time Wounds All Heels." I sent it to Ray and it popped into print almost immediately. But before that time his response was such that I realized I'd found a new market and a continuing character. What had started out as a one-shot story quickly developed into a series.

I won't attempt to describe the Feep yarns. Frankly, it's been many years since I've read any of the adventures of the modern Munchausen who narrated his saga in

rhyming-slang. I remember some of the titles— "Son of a Witch," "The Little Man Who Wasn't All There," "Jerk the Giant Killer," "Stuporman," "Genie with the Light Brown Hair," and that's about all. I did a total of twenty-three Lefty Feep stories, the last one being published in 1950, but the bulk appeared during WWII. It was a time when readers were looking for escape and a few laughs—and that's what I tried to provide. There was never the slightest pretense that I was the forerunner of J. G. Ballard, even though I still believe in my heart of hearts that I was probably just as funny.

There are no humorous and informative anecdotes about the pulp days. During the time I wrote the Feep stories, and other tales for Palmer's magazines, I got in the habit of making occasional weekend visits to Chicago and became acquainted with the 'Ziff Davis circle,' which included, at various times, Howard Browne, William L. Hamling, William P. McGivern, David Wright O'Brien, Rog Phillips, Berkeley Livingston, and others. An all-night poker game was usually in order, or disorder, and the penny-ante stakes kept the play on a strictly social level. I never solicited an assignment for a story, and Ray never offered one—it seemed tacitly understood that I'd just keep on writing Feep whenever an idea occurred to me, and send in anything else I thought suitable. There was no discussion, no intrigue, I never negotiated for a rate-increase or cover-story or by-line or an advance, this was still the Midwest, and Ziff Davis (like the poker game) was a penny-ante operation.

After a time Palmer got hooked on Richard S. Shaver and his 'mystery' and I gradually phased out of the Feep series and into suspense stories, science-fantasy, and a job as copywriter in a factory turning out fortune-cookies.

Now almost fifty years have passed and Dorothy Parker is variously long-gotten by all except pedants, myself included, like Dick Gess. In 1968 a tower paperback anthology *Laugh Lines: Comedy by Women* edited by Susan Edmiston and Roger Ellwood represented Dottie Wounds, Ed Heels, Ike Dee, Enid Van Rope, Lee Ann Brown, Sweet Fanny Farmer as published by those great folks who gave you Sid Caesar. As far as I know, these were the last times the names appeared in print, only cp. Lois Wyse, perhaps that's just as well. Dated colloquialisms—mundane plots and sketchy narrative plotting—these ingredients would hardly please today's tolerance condemned as it is by the subtleties of Mr. Agnew or a Martha Mitchell.

Herb Gold, who kindly permitted me to use his Dorothy Parker material as submitted, will in Midwinter, 1970, be issued a spanking new Xerox-type edition of Volume Thirteen (1913) of The Great Historical Compilation of the Seeds of Shotgun Lyrics, Typings, personal meta-rabinal and several million words of Liberation covering in some thirty-seven volumes, in lieu of Dottie's total bequest. But Herb's anthology, and the wider one than Dottie's Poetry Works, still lives. It is

WILSON TUCKER—THE SMO-O-OTH OPERATOR

A writer's mail brings few surprises.

Every day the postman deposits the usual items in my mailbox—new bills, old bills, past due bills, and threats to sue. Rejection slips from editors who have seen my work for the first time, and suicide notes from editors who have seen it before. I get requests for my signature from autograph collectors, and requests for my manuscripts from garbage collectors. Once a woman flattered me by asking for a lock of my hair, but it turned out she was stuffing a mattress. Gallantly, I refrained from telling her where.

Today, however, I got a different kind of request from Worldcon Vice-Chairman Jim Loehr:

"Would you consider expanding your piece on Tucker from the BYOB Con 5 program book for the Worldcon program book? I personally can't think of a better choice to give Tucker the treatment he deserves."

Well, I can think of several people better equipped to give Tucker the treatment he deserves—a doctor, a psychiatrist, a public executioner, or even a good embalmer—but since I'm the victim of bad *karma*, I'll do my best.

How did it all begin?

In 1933 foolishly ignoring the warning "Abandon hope, all ye who enter here," I entered science fiction fandom. And it wasn't too long thereafter that I became aware of one of the very earliest fanzines—*Le Zombie*, aka *The Bloomington News Letter* in a previous incarnation—published by one Bob Tucker aka Hoy Ping Pong. Reading this publication I wasn't sure which was the editor's real name. I finally decided it must be Hoy Ping Pong because he wrote like a Chinaman whose familiarity with the English language was limited to laundry lists and the type of messages found in stale fortune-cookies.

Nevertheless, this particular (or not-so-particular) fan seemed to be highly regarded. I learned that he was a motion-picture projectionist who lived in Bloomington, Illinois presumably in a post office box lined with plain sealed envelopes containing reading matter for adults only. His observations and aphorisms were widely quoted—usually by himself.

It wasn't until 1946 that I actually encountered Tucker in the flesh. Tucker had been into flesh for years, and was quite famous for it at the Pacificon in Los Angeles. To my surprise I discovered that he was Caucasian and far from illiterate. In fact, a year or so later he published his first mystery novel, *The Chinese Doll*. This, of course, cast doubt as to whether his name wasn't really Hoy Ping Pong after all. It also cast doubts on his literacy. And to compound the problem, his byline wasn't Bob Tucker but Wilson A. Tucker. Under this name he continued to write mysteries, science fiction novels, and short stories. His work was so good that one could only suspect that there was indeed a third *persona*, a real Wilson A. Tucker, who merely masqueraded as a fan-humorist and convention-attendee.

But it was as Bob Tucker that I knew him — and during the years that followed, I came to know him well. In 1948 he was the fan guest-of-honor at the Torcon. As pro guest-of-honor, I shared the platform with him, to say nothing of the contents of various bottles and poker-pots. We got into the habit of meeting at other fannish gatherings — in Chicago, and at the early Midwestcons in Ohio. We foregathered at many later Worldcons, visiting in our respective homes, took automobile trips together, and for a time we even co-edited a fanzine for publisher Matty Greenberg. Now that old fan magazines are becoming rare collectors' items, I often regret that my own copies were torn up when I attempted to remove them from the bottom of our birdcage.

During the Sixties and early Seventies, Tucker continued to flourish, fannishly and professionally. I sometimes suspect that Bob Tucker has become Wilson A. Tucker's worst enemy — his fannish fame tends to dwarf the recognition he deserves for such novels as *The Long Loud Silence*, *Wild Talent*, *The Lincoln-Hunters* and *Ice and Iron*. Admirers of easy-going, fun-loving Bob Tucker often seem unmindful of the man's serious achievements. If so, it's their loss, for Tucker has made exceptional contributions to the science fiction genre.

And yet it is as a fan that he seems preeminent. That is why he has been chosen as Toastmaster here in Kansas City, some forty-odd years after his first entry into fandom. That is why, last year, a special fan-fund was raised to send him to the Worldcon in Australia. It is a measure of Tucker's importance in fandom that the fund was actually oversubscribed. Either that, or fandom was hoping he'd take the hint, and the extra money, and stay in Australia permanently.

But after a stint of city hopping and kangaroo-hopping, Tucker returned – like Douglas MacArthur, Godzilla and the seven-year itch.

Last year both he and I were in Kansas City at the BYOB Convention which Jim Loehr mentioned in his letter, with me as Guest of Honor and Tucker as Toastmaster. It was then that I wrote the biographical sketch which follows here. If you didn't happen to see it last year, you can peruse it now. If you've already read it, perhaps you can line the bottom of your own birdcage.

Anyway, here's what I said.

Devotees of television late night movies can still encounter a 1946 MGM version of the *Ziegfeld Follies*. One of its skits features Red Skelton as a television announcer extolling — and imbibing — a product known as 'Guzzler's Gin.' Each sip of this concoction brings the gravelly-voiced Mr. Skelton a step closer to a total wipe-out. In the end he topples over and crashes to the floor with a final despairing cry of: 'Sno-o-o-o-o-o!'

God in his infinite wisdom and mercy knows where Red Skelton ever discovered Bob Tucker's famous bottle-cry. But as a tribute to Tucker's long-time influence on our culture, think of it almost thirty years ago when Tucker was already well past his prime, his words of wisdom were still being publicly quoted.

As far as I know, Tucker never took a drink of Guzzler's Gin – in his late Jim Beam, yes; Canadian Club, Irish whiskey, Maryland rye, Thunderbird, Ripple, nail polish, paint remover, antifreeze, three in one sewing machine oil, Dr. Ascher's Liquid Remedy For Hog-Constipation — I've seen Tucker gulp all of these, though not necessarily in that order. Even today, I would not bet my eyeballs with Gertrol, he is still

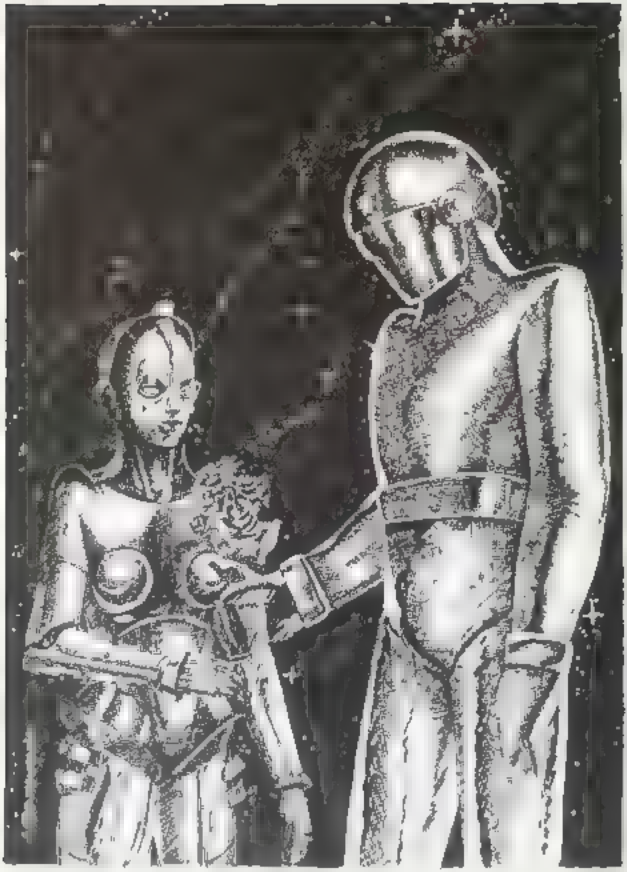
defiantly cackling, "Smo-o-o-o-o-th!" before crashing to the floor—where he gropes for another bottle.

If the reader surmises that I am picturing Tucker as a lush let me hasten to correct that impression. Any drinking Tucker may do is undoubtedly a compensation for a deprived youth—after all, what could he have possibly found to quench his thirst in Neanderthal times?

I suppose it was that early lack of alcohol which forced Bob Tucker to turn to other activities. Hugo Gernsback has often been called the Father of Science Fiction, but I wouldn't count Tucker out until I see a paternity test. Certainly Tucker was one of the first of the Big Name Fans—and, heaven help us all, he still holds that distinction today. He went on to become a Big Name Pro, in mystery fiction and science fiction both—and again, as anyone who has read his latest work can tell you, he continues to hold his own with the top figures in the field. Bob Tucker has been honored and acclaimed for his manifold achievements, and justly so. But I think in the last analysis, his greatest reward has come in the form of the genuine love and devotion he has inspired throughout fandom during his lifetime of distinguished effort. Here is a man who inspires—and deserves—our admiration.

And so it is that I say to you younger fans who may be attending a convention for the first time—by all means do not neglect this opportunity. Be sure to take advantage of the chance to go up to it as living legend and shake his hand.

Just remember, afterwards, to count your fingers.



MEN, MYTHS, AND MONSTERS

It has frequently been said that fantasy and science fiction are two sides of the same coin.

There are some writers of science fiction who disagree. I think I can understand why. In this world of ours, the average science fiction writer sees very few coins come his way — so perhaps he doesn't even realize that a coin has two sides.

But I assure you it does. And the hypothetical coin of which I speak is emblazoned with a face that is turned upwards and outwards, staring into the future and worlds beyond. This is the science fiction, or fact, side of our coin, here. Turn the coin over and we find tails — tails of dragons and monsters and demons disappearing right to the past, avoiding our direct gaze, but still visible to us. This is the fantasy side, carrying the same weight and substance as the other; without it, the coin could not exist.

Our coin is counterfeit, of course, for we writers who, whether we call our works fantasy or science fiction, are dealing with appearances, not reality.

We are assembled here to examine some of those

[illegible] appearances [illegible] appearances on film. We can learn a great deal about the relationship between fantasy and science fiction by viewing the film's candidates for showing at this festival. In order to support that knowledge I intend therefore wherever possible to refer to films that are not being shown here. And of necessity I shall discuss them by the titles under which they were known or released in the United States.

In 1902 a motion picture appeared as a tribute to the Brussels film industry. It was called *The Magic Box*. The title, of course, referred to the motion picture camera itself. And there was perhaps also an unconscious relationship between science fiction and fantasy.

According to the realistic frame of reference imposed by science fiction the motion picture camera is indeed a box. But in terms of fantasy it is a machine that makes magic. A magic box—Pandora's Box if you will. The box of ancient legend which opened to bring mischief into the world. The camera then is a reality that creates illusion.

The very first film makers seem to have ignored this and concentrated on recording reality: documentary fashion. They photographed parades, events, ceremonies, travel scenes. In one sense they were very modern—like some of our film makers they merely wanted to tell it like it is. I wonder if these daring experimentalists realized the burden of conventionality on the unplanned event, their discarding of the traditional story line and script, their hand-held camera techniques and use of natural lighting represented a bold step that will soon carry motion pictures to the heights—of 1899.

So much for progress. But who was the first to exploit the fantastic possibilities of motion pictures?

About the turn of the century a professional magician

Georges Méliès discovered he could play even better tricks with a motion picture camera. With its aid he could out perform any stage conjurer — making objects people and whole scenes appear and disappear at will. In a tiny glass-enclosed studio on the outskirts of Paris he made hundreds of short films. Fascinated by his opportunity to achieve illusions by mechanical means he began to use fades, dissolves, stop-motion, the speeded up camera and other devices to create fantasies.

Drawing upon everything from ancient fairy tales to his own improvised science fiction scenarios Méliès pioneered in the field aided by his actor friends and a corps of ballet beauties. He painted his own sets, used home-made props, designed his own costuming — and became remarkably successful.

But when he set forth to do such films as *The Impossible Voyage* and *A Trip to the Moon* the results bore little or no resemblance to today's science fiction. By our standards his work qualifies only as comic fantasy. Perhaps he can be excused when one considers he had no technological background to draw upon. He was trying to depict space travel at a time before the Wright brothers and Santos Dumont had made their first flights. When Méliès imagined his own means of voyaging through space there were only two ways man knew in which to get off the ground — one was by balloon and the other was by rope at the end of a gallows. Both methods were somewhat dangerous.

So Méliès's work — while fantasy in its presentation of future methodology — was also science fiction insofar as it was correct in predicting future efforts to achieve space travel. Let us go further and say that his *style* was antistatic even so his *subject matter* was definitely within the

province of science fiction. And here we are, viewing again the two sides of the same coin.

Films—and even historical records of films—are perishable commodities. There is no way of knowing what the very first science fiction movie might have been. All that can be said with certainty is that one of the first we know about is the Selig Polyscope production in 1908 of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.

Here is a title that has been filmed and re-filmed time and time again in the studios of many countries of the world, and is a vehicle for many great popular performers. During the past sixty years a great deal has been written concerning these motion picture versions of this famous story—but I have seldom read any specimen-mold as science fiction.

And yet *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, particularly in its most celebrated motion picture versions—starring respectively, John Barrymore, Fredric March, and Spencer Tracy—is quite definitely science fiction by any interpretation of the term.

It has to do with a scientist, a doctor of medicine who is conducting some scientific research in chemistry, and who makes a discovery—again, scientific, not metaphysical—which concerns the transformation of mind and body, physically and psychologically, as the result of the effects of swallowing a chemical compound. Psychiatry—which its practitioners like to regard as a science—is invoked in the resultant delineation of dual personality, of manifestations which may be said to resemble cyclothymic or manic-depressive phases, or schizophrenic symptoms. Now this I submit is not fantasy; there are chemicals which can indeed induce such symptoms both physical and mental. On the physical side I would not go so far as to say that we have yet isolated a drug or a diet which can produce so extreme a change—

that is to say, we cannot yet turn a handsome gentle science fiction writer into a monstrous ape like publisher. But we do know that certain chemical compounds or derivatives can radically alter appearance, metabolism, motor reflexes, we also know that such compounds can induce conditions which seem in all ways identical to various forms of mental illness—and that such manifestations of illness may be subject to sudden and unexpected recurrences. The slight extrapolation necessary to create the film versions of *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* most certainly places such pictures under the heading of science fiction. Science fiction, mind you, that deals with the subject of man rather than machines, and this reaching the screen as early as 1908.

Two years later, in 1910 the Edison Film Company released the first film version of *Frankenstein*. A still, a suspicion, and a story-synopsis survive, but apparently no print. The still gives us a glimpse of a rather lumpy monster. The suspicion offers a theory that he role may have been played by an actor named Charles Ogle, and the story synopsis tells us that the monster—though created in the laboratory in a cauldron of blazing chemicals—later evaporates into thin air. Thus the film apparently progressed from a science fiction beginning to a fantasy ending. The same was true in the second version released in 1915 under the title *Life Without Soul*, in which the story turned out to be a dream.

Another man-made monster—*The Golem*,—created by magical means, made its first film appearance in 1915 and has been resurrected many times since. Again and even more definitely than in these early versions of *Frankenstein* the element of fantasy predominates. But essentially, even in such outright legends as that of the Sorcerer's Apprentice with its magic broom, we can detect the genesis of a

common science fictional concept: the machine that turns amok—that turns against its master, man. Call it monster, golem, or robot, the theme is the revolt of the machines and *this* is surely science fiction.

We might find it significant to notice that in the early days of films this idea was generally presented in the form of a legend or a dream. The notion that man had anything to really fear from his machines seemed a little absurd—until World War I demonstrated that man's creations were now capable of destroying their creators.

This was something to think about, but when the war ended people apparently didn't want to think. It is interesting that several more versions of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* appeared at this time, as though to remind the audience that we ourselves, rather than machines, might be our own worst enemies. Film goers, however, were tired of enemies and strife, including the state of inner conflict. They much preferred to see Barrymore as a lover than distorting his great profile as the hideous Mr. Hyde.

So in the early Twenties, when science fiction films were made at all they were apt to be comedies. In 1921 Fox Films made a modest picture called *The Last Man on Earth*. Its title is self explanatory, and if it presented any message at all, it was merely that of the dangers in a world dominated by women—a danger which every man is already quite aware of. You don't need to go to the movies to find that out, all you need to do is go home to your wife.

In the same year a Russian director, Jacob Protazanov, was responsible for *Aelita*, also a comedy, with a long dream sequence set on Mars. The set-designs in the film were inspired by the earlier *Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*. In France, also in 1924, the youthful René Clair offered another comedy—*The Crazy Ray*—which, with its trick

camera-work, was really a throwback to the early films of Méliès. These films, together with the prehistorical panoply of *The Lost World* were more truly escape fiction than science fiction. *The Lost World*, of course, set the pattern for such later efforts as *King Kong*, *Son of Kong*, *Mighty Joe Young*, and scores of other motion pictures depending on special effects, miniatures, and trick photography.

Then in 1926 came *Metropolis*. Fritz Lang's ambitious presentation of a future civilization. Never before, and seldom since, has a world of tomorrow been presented to motion picture audiences on such a scale. As many of you know, Fritz Lang came to the making of *Metropolis* after having directed the epic saga *Die Nibelungen*. And some of you who remember my remark about fantasy and science fiction being two sides of the same coin may believe that in going from one film to the other Mr. Lang was turning that coin to give us a glimpse of the opposite side. It is my personal feeling that he did not turn the coin over at all, he merely changed the gate on its face — so that instead of presenting us with a legend of the past, he presented us with a legend of the future. For there is more than a hint of serenity in this tale of tomorrow — with its imaginative shots of the machine as Moloch, devouring men; its references to the Tower of Babel; its evil robot, echoing the concept of the Golem.

Lang's *Woman in the Moon*, together with another European production of a few years later, *F.P.1* did show us the reverse image of the coin. This was science fiction as prophecy rather than as a vehicle for warning against legendary perils. And in the United States in early sound film, *Just Imagine* gave us another comedy of future errors.

But surely the first major science fiction effort in talking pictures was the 1931 version of *Frankenstein*. And here

once again, the science fiction theme — the creation of artificial life in the laboratory — was intermingled with pure and impure fantasy. The scientist as sorcerer, for instance, giving birth to a monster which in itself has many mechanical attributes — the concept of dead bodies assembled and reassembled to create the whole human beings death. This is such stuff as dreams are made of. Dreams and nightmares.

Let us remember the year of *Frankenstein*'s release, 1931. By then the science had come to play a more important and more sinister, darkly recognizable part in the organization of our society. And in the minds of many people society had failed. We were in the midst of a vast world-wide depression. We were in search of a scapegoat for our misfortunes and that scapegoat was science. So throughout the decade of the Thirties most of the science fiction films were in reality anti-science fiction.

Time and again we were shown motion pictures which predicted and demonstrated scientific techniques that were fundamentally sound: the use of artificial organs and transplants in surgery, the theory of cryogenics, the inducing of mutations. The theories were all sound but the scientists were all mad. Across the screen stalked an endless parade of mad men — mad doctors, mad dentists, mad pharmacists. Not only were they mad, they were stingy as well. Or else how can one explain why they all had such a poor grade of assistants, every one of which was usually physically deformed and mentally retarded? Apparently these brilliant screen scientists were willing to spend a fortune on laboratory machinery and equipment, but in even the most desperate and daring of experiments they employed nothing but the cheapest kind of slave labor. These idiots mixed up their instructions, substituted the wrong brains or organs,

bungled their work, and generally made fatal mistakes which brought destruction to the experiments and the experimenters. But those stingy scientists never seemed to learn.

Anyone who wants to know how the average worker felt about his wages and his employer during the Depression can find more than a clue in the science fiction horror pictures of that era. Films such as *The Island of Lost Souls* in which Charles Laughton played H. G. Wells's character Dr. Moreau, are almost a parable of the class struggle as seen by many members of the audience in those years. It presents a view of the scientist as ruler and exploiter, to whom his subjects are literally beasts created in the image of man but held in subjugation as animals.

When H. G. Wells's view of the future, *The Shape of Things to Come*, was presented midway through that dark decade, it included in its prophetic glimpses a world ravaged and reduced to barbarism by war—but held out the hope that science, employing the proper means and objectives, would prevail and restore a better way of life.

That hope was short-lived. By 1940 we were confronting World War II and science was allied with the military in the service of destruction. The mad scientist of 1910 was *Dr. Cyclops*. In his world, people were diminished, reduced to helpless, doll-sized creatures at the dubious mercy of an all-powerful giant who was, significantly, half blind. As a symbol of the distorted vision of the conqueror, Dr. Cyclops represented the trend of science fiction films in the early Forties. And yet I must return to my image of the coin once again and remind you that his very name is rooted in our ancient myths, our memories of monsters.

When World War II ended a mushroom cloud had settled over the Earth, and audiences frantically sought escape

The science they feared had created this cloud, but it could also create a means of avoiding fall-out through flight. Flight to other planets, other worlds, outer space. Unknown enemies might lurk there, but perhaps they would be easier to conquer and wield than the known terror of thermonuclear destruction. So science fiction films in the late Forties and early Fifties began to take us to the Moon and Mars and realms beyond.

Even here, however, motion picture audiences did not leave fantasy behind. The magicians and the monsters encountered on distant planets bore a strange resemblance to the creatures of Earth's oldest legends. In these motion pictures, scientists created a spaceship which served as a vehicle to transport us to another world of fantasy.

And in the so-called science fiction films with an earthly setting, the past was even more alive — in the shape of gigantic monsters, rising from our prehistoric past when disturbed by today's atomic rumbling. *Godzilla* and *The Beast From Twenty Thousand Fathoms* and all the others were really monster films rather than science fiction. Hollywood people seemed to feel at home with monsters — after all, most of them were no worse than the heads of motion picture studios.

But there were also alien presences in the atmosphere of Earth. People began to talk about flying saucers — and in films, invaders from outside nearly destroyed the world, usually with the able assistance of George Pal. I think finally Mr. Pal succeeded in frightening himself, and decided to escape in *The Time Machine*, a brilliantly imaginative version of the H. G. Wells classic. But meanwhile, back in our own time, audiences withstood *The Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, coped with the evil inhabitants of the *Image of the Damned*, and experienced

Panic in the Year Zero.

We were beginning, slowly, to realize that our problems were right here on Earth, and they would have to be solved on Earth. And that those whom we regarded as aliens among us were not necessarily extraterrestrials but human beings who somehow stood outside the pale of ordinary humanity. The beasts and the monsters were not necessarily strangers to ourselves—and sometimes, even in their most frightening forms, they were all too familiar.

The last time I had the pleasure of visiting the late great Boris Karloff, we discussed the amazing longevity of the 'Frankenstein' monster—who died, time and again, only to be resurrected. I spoke of my theory concerning the popular appeal of the monster that audiences consciously and unconsciously identified with this creature particularly the adolescent members of audiences. Growing up is always an ordeal in our society and there are times when most young people think of themselves as monsters—they feel themselves to be clumsy, inarticulate, unable to communicate with the adult community. They often consider themselves to be ugly and rejected, they regard themselves as misunderstood, at the mercy of forces beyond their control, at odds with authority. For generation after generation, the 'Frankenstein' monster has served as a self-image to youth.

Mr. Karloff agreed but wondered aloud why a more modern symbol had not come to supplant the monster for the young people of today. He suggested in his gentle way that perhaps his monster was just a trifle old-fashioned. Whereupon I reminded him that his was a very modern monster, not only in attitude but even in physical appearance. Consider the shapeless garments, the sweater or the shaggy coat, the drooping lids and the slow

movements so similar to those of one in a drugged state observe the unkempt hair and the bangs—is not yesterday's monster the very prototype of today's hippie?

We laughed and then we sobered. Because both of us, in our separate ways, had come to recognize the power of the symbol, the curious way in which imagination begets reality. And the old legends still return to life in new forms.

At this moment I think science fiction films are in a state of flux. The coin of fantasy and science fiction is spinning rapidly, giving us glimpses of both sides. We can see the old fear of machines—even in *2001*, men must do battle against a villainous computer. We still catch glimpses of fear in the future—in *1984*, *The Tenth Victim*, *Planet of the Apes*. In some of the so-called 'exploitation' films the science-fictional elements are still thirty years behind the concepts of today's science fiction writers. But gradually, motion pictures are catching up. And when movie makers do catch up with writers, they will find that many of today's creators of science fiction are more interested in people than in technology. They are not afraid of machines, but of the minds of those who make them and sometimes misuse them. They are afraid of the range and reach of those minds, and of our own lack of understanding of their potentials.

Motion picture makers are beginning to understand that the new science fiction deals with social commentary and human problems—sometimes in sensationalized terms, as in *Hell in the Streets*, and sometimes more thoughtfully, as in *Charly*. They are considering the power of *The Power*, learning that though the coin they mint has two sides, it is still a mingling of the same basic metals, many of which have not been properly valued and assayed.

They are learning that men and myths and monsters are not separate entities but part of the whole—men *are* myths.

men *are* monsters, and gods and angels too. And so the focus of attention shifts from the far-out worlds to the inner worlds of the human psyche. The problems of good and evil are *our* problems, and as creators we must learn to deal with destroyers. That is the true goal of science fiction: the examination of the *human* condition.

For we are, at long last, beginning to realize, with that old science fiction writer, William Shakespeare, that "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, but in ourselves." And in ourselves we must seek salvation.

AN OPEN LETTER TO A YOUNG GIRL ABOUT TO PUBLISH HER FIRST FANZINE

This morning I received a request to write a fanzine article for a young lady residing in Lansdale, Pennsylvania. Imagine my surprise when, upon opening the envelope, a nice crisp new $100 bill fluttered out.

I ask you to imagine my surprise because it didn't really happen that way. In 26 years of writing fan fiction, I've always *hoped* that it would happen sooner or later. And heaven knows, I've hinted around enough.

But here it is, 1960, and I'm right back where I started in 1934—still writing for nothing. So much for progress.

I only hope, my dear young lady, that you will climb up a better record through the years than I have. When I began this fanzine business I was 16. Being two years older than you are now, and far from naive about the field, I didn't try to publish a magazine merely submitted material. And while since then I've edited and co-edited many fanzines, I have never soiled my delicate fingers on duties like dunning the contributors, actually messing with a mimeograph. This is not entirely a matter of laziness on my part; in fact, it's only about 98%. Laziness. The other 2% is due to the realization that any time

I had no end with [illegible] object. It was some [illegible] backs that [illegible] days. I can't even use a simple [illegible] open [illegible] I went to [illegible] that I have such short [illegible] I never be [illegible] people [illegible] meal. Of course, it is always possible to [illegible] this problem by eating TV Dinners [illegible] I hate TV Dinners – the [illegible] taste terrible.

Now that I have been [illegible] engaged in writing, [illegible] recession and such [illegible] fizz, it is hard for me to [illegible] that the literary standards [illegible] with [illegible] discussed as I am reduced to writing [illegible] words – one syllable or less. How can I possibly fulfill your request [illegible] the way [illegible] I myself entered [illegible] some [illegible] to [illegible] dress when Rose Hawk was still [illegible] John Campbell [illegible] was just [illegible] in a [illegible]?

Those were the wonderful times though. We only had a [illegible] fifteen [illegible] and [illegible] and since most of them contained articles by Bob Tucker nobody bothered to read them. Fans were only interested in some kind of [illegible] stuff called "Science Fiction" which they read in [illegible] old [illegible] journals called "prozines" and even discussed them with one another. The leading writers were named Bob Silverberg. In those days Philadelphia was still a city instead [illegible] a front on *Avenue des Bardstand*.

But I still remember the high excitement with which I discovered, the [illegible] and the [illegible] of pleasure I received from my participating in fanning. I still remember because I still enjoy it. Luckily for me, I can encounter any sort-old [illegible] fanning-ons like myself and [illegible] I first entered fandom. In those days I was just a snot-nosed young [illegible] neophyte.

Just how much longer I'll be around, I don't know; there are signs, [illegible] portents that I'll be bowing out before [illegible] too great [illegible] time has passed, [illegible] chronaut still permits me to bow at all.

So it's nice, in a way, to see young people like yourself enter into the spirit of fandom and I hope your first issue will be a great success. Mine was—her name is Sally Ann and she's now a year and a half older than you are.

Fannishly yours,

Robert Bloch

THE CONVENTIONEER'S PRAYER

Hail to thee, Kali, Goddess of Death, Black Mother of Murder, Guardian of Thieves, Strugglers, and Science Fiction Convention Fans!

If in my heart evil prevails and I succumb to the temptation to attend the Convention in San Francisco I will have need of your guidance.

Protect me, oh Kali, against such perils as:

1. *Encountering the people you've met once before ample years ago at some previous gathering.* That is, *they* have met you, but *you* have never met them, because you just happened to wander into this party and the room was so crowded and noisy that the host merely mumbled introductions or said something like, I guess you folks know each other, and let it go at that. Whereupon you looked for a comfortable place to roost in and to find there was nothing except one vacancy under the bed. So you crawled there and never said another word to the strangers. And now here they are again, and they expect you to introduce them to the people you're with, and how can you when you don't know their names? It's

so inadequate to say "I want you to meet a couple of people whose bed I spent the night under in Denver. *Do something about this, will you, Kab, old girl?*

› *Mascots.* Every Convention has a tendency to attract a small number of mutants. These are people who are not governed by normal physiological laws. They do things such as getting up at 9 or 10 in the morning and eating breakfast, and they want you to follow suit. Some of them even *shave*. Mostly the males. A few are excellent, for that. Please, Kath, spare me!

4 *Peas.* Every Convention has a banquet. And every Convention Banquet includes peas. Not *fresh* peas, but Convention peas. I think they come out of special barrels. On long sea voyages in the days of sailing ships, they used to preserve the bodies of dead officers in casks of rum, and then give the rum to the crew the next voyage out. Well, I've a hunch those barrels are still in use today, storing Convention peas. If you've never been to a Convention, you've perhaps at least eaten in a Chop Suey joint. Avoid peas in both places. For that matter, seeing what those barrels may have contained, don't eat Chinese or French fries, Italian sausage, Swedish meatballs, or Sauerkraut.

4 *Romancing.* You go to a convention like this and a beautiful Irish walks up to you—a Divine Doll. And she stares at you fondly and holds your arm and you think well, it depends on *you* what you think. Anyway, it always turns out that she just came to your hotel because she wants you to introduce her to Tony Boucher. *Kath, this has gotta stop!*

› *Look-alikes.* A Convention being what it is or worse, you must expect to encounter an amazing number of people whose sole concern it is to resemble one another.

Dozens of fans have the same sensitive pointed heads, at least one each, and dozens of pros have the same artistic pursed hands. In such a gathering of physical counterparts, full doppelgangers and half astral doubles, it is easy to make mistakes in identity. I was mistaken for Samuel Mines and nearly got lynched. *Mother Kali, I beseech you!*

6 *Speech Impediments.* For some horrid reason most Conventions schedule the best speeches for the worst times. Many of the most interesting and entertaining performers are placed on the program at the most fantastic and inopportune hours—that is to say, somewhere between 10 a.m. and 10 p.m. In consequence I very seldom hear them. Why can't these people be put on at a time when everybody is wide awake and around, such as from midnight to 5 in the morning? *Goddess, be kind!*

7 *Intelligence.* I have nothing against intelligence in its place, but as anyone who has ever attended one knows, a Convention is certainly *not* that place. And yet I'm afraid that I'm liable to run into people like Campbell, the Kuttners, Matheson, Anderson, Brown, Grant, Evans, Davy, etc., who insist upon rationality. Whereas I am much more used to specimens like Marty Greenberg and Lloyd Eshbach. *Please, Kali, don't expect me to talk to anyone above the level of Dave Kyle! Or, for that matter, nothing lower, either.*

So, Kali, if I weaken and attend this clambake, I truly rely upon thy protection from all seven of these deadly dangers. And in return I shall gladly offer up unto you sacrifices in the olden manner.

In return for the first point, I will slit the throat of a black goat at the crossroads—or Richard Geis, if you prefer. For

[illegible] and three — Les and Es Gale [illegible] of spring [illegible] point Lon L and make to strangle Georges Elkins Tot [illegible] Earl Mercier Betty Gale Es points sex Ellen sings a wake for Finegan

Les points sex Les Les serve the Peter J Voznesenskaya Worth an epic a history with Gonyash dissidents a tragedy Yekaterina clients, yet

This I swear at Cavour upon stock of *Ulysses* solemn and Classic truth. Exercise your Kilsenanes into Kilkenny Love Leah.' But I shall be dead when I will revise attempt to read another Convention age in. At least not until next year

Devoutly,

Bob Bloch

POE AND LOVECRAFT

Comparisons between Edgar Allan Poe and Howard Phillips Lovecraft are, I suppose, inevitable seemingly in recent years they are also interminable

I shall not, therefore, repeat the usual recital of similarities to be found within their work there will be no mention of black cats, *revenants*, or Antarctic settings *per se*.

But at the same time I have no intention of making a calculated bid for attention by deliberately asserting as some have also declared, that no real resemblance exists aside from superficial employment of stock characters and themes common to virtually all stories in the genre

To me this is an untenable statement Lovecraft, like every writer of fantasy and horror fiction subsequent to Poe, was necessarily influenced by the work of his predecessor — and to a certain extent his work needs must be derivative in some slight sense Actually, Lovecraft's homage to Poe in his essay *Supernatural Horror in Literature* indicates a degree of appreciation and admiration which leaves no doubt as to the profound impression made upon him by the earlier master.

But to me the most fruitful area of comparison lies within an examination of the backgrounds and personalities of the writers themselves.

Consider the facts. Both Poe and Lovecraft were New Englanders born. Both were, to all intents and purposes, fatherless at an early age. Both developed a lifelong affinity for poetry and the elements of a classical education. Both utilized archaisms in their writing styles and affected personal eccentricities which in time became consciously cultivated.

Although Poe spent a part of his youth in England and traveled along the Atlantic seaboard, in later life and while Lovecraft ventured up into Canada and down into Florida on vacations a few years prior to his death, neither man ever ventured west of the Alleghenies. Lovecraft on one occasion did skirt them to visit E. Hoffmann Price briefly in his New Orleans home, but essentially he and Poe were Easterners. Their outlook was to a marked degree, provincial, even parochial.

That in some respects the two were dissimilar is, of course, self-evident. Poe's conviviality and tippling contrasts with Lovecraft's retiring nature and strong teetotalism. Poe had an actor's love of the public platform whereas Lovecraft was more at ease in private conversation. There were other differences to be sure, but these are minor in comparison to similarities.

Each of the two was an inveterate reader; they shared a marked romanticism in their attitude towards women, both were nocturnalists, aelurophiles, devoted to correspondence, addicted to conscious coarseness, abhorrent of vulgarisms and crudity.

Both men distrusted 'foreigners' in the mass; both retained a profound admiration for the English. These

attitudes are plainly evident in their work, which is in many particulars removed and remote from the main current of American life.

A reader attempting to capture some glimpse of the United States in the 1830-1850 period would gain small enlightenment from the poetry and fiction of Poe. At a time when the entire nation was engaged in a westward thrust, beginning with the peregrinations of the mountain men and ending with the great Gold Rush in the year of Poe's death, one searches in vain for a West which does not seemingly even exist in his literary compass.

Byronic heroes sequestered in British and continental locales scarcely reflect the American attitudes or aptitudes in the era of Old Hickory, Davy Crockett, the fall of the Alamo, the Mexican War, and the growing turmoil over slavery.

Nor would a reader find more typically American protagonists amongst the pedants, professors and regionally oriented recluses of Lovecraft's tales in which there is scarcely a hint of the manners and mores of the Roaring Twenties or of the Great Depression which followed in the ensuing decade. Aside from a few remarks regarding the influx of immigrants and concomitant destruction of old folkways and landmarks, plus brief mentions of the intellectually "wild college set," Lovecraft ignores the post-WWI Jazz Age in its entirety. Coolidge, Hoover, FDR, Lindbergh, Babe Ruth, Al Capone, Valentino, Mencken, and the prototypes of Babbitt have no existence in HPL's realm. It is difficult to believe that Howard Phillips Lovecraft was a literary contemporary of Ernest Hemingway.

And yet a further comparison between Lovecraft and Poe remains, one of profound importance in any consideration

of their work because it softens any charge that the two writers were totally unaware of the actual world and the artistic attainment of their times.

I refer, of course, to their mutual interest in science. Both Poe and Lovecraft were acute observers of the scientific and pseudo-scientific developments of their respective days and often attempted to utilize the latest theories and discoveries in their writing. It is only necessary to cite Poe's use of mesmerism, his employment of the balloon hoax, his detailing of data in the Arthur Gordon Pym cowrie to prove the point. And his Eureka is pure poesy.

Lovecraft, for his part, relies on scientific background and material in his Pym-like At the Mountains of Madness, The Shadow Out of Time and other stories notable for his immediate adaption of the newly discovered ninth planet in The Whisperer in Darkness.

Lovecraft's interest in astronomy underscored a lifelong increasing interest in other fields of scientific endeavor just as Poe's early experiences at West Point arsenal kindled his preoccupation with codes and ciphers. Neither man is professional writers were well and widely read in the contemporary work of their day. Poe is a working critic demonstrates his knowledge in his nonfiction reviews and Lovecraft in his correspondence proves himself no stranger to Proust, Joyce, Spengler and Freud.

But the point is that Poe and Lovecraft deliberately chose to turn their backs on contemporary style and subject matter to create their own individual worlds of fantasy. In this above all else they were similar.

And it is this above all else we readers of Poe and Lovecraft are fortunate indeed. We shall never know and never care what Edgar Allan Poe thought of Andy Jackson's kitchen cabinet. But how H. P. Lovecraft regarded the Teapot Dome

scandal. Small loss when both have given us glimpses of worlds peculiarly and provocatively their very own.

For the final similarity is this—Poe and Lovecraft are our two American geniuses of fantasy, comparable each to the other and incomparably superior to all the rest who follow in their wake.

LETTER TO A TAFF WINNER

Dear Sir (or Madame — as the case may be — and incidentally, if you don't know you'd better find out or you may miss half the fun of your trip).

So you have been named winner of the TAFF and you're going to England for the convention. Perhaps you plan a cruise on the Queen Elizabeth. Then again you might build a raft like Walt Willis did and pocket the money.

At any rate, you're terribly thrilled and terribly excited. You're anxious to meet all your English cousins and see how they feel about ////// even closer relationships.

But let's face it.

Just what do you actually *know* about England?

Chances are, practically nothing. Chances are you know practically nothing about anything — because if you did you'd have at times expressed your opinions on subjects in fanzines, and if you'd express an opinion then most of fandom would have hated you and you'd never have been given any TAFF votes in the first place.

So let's assume, charitably, that you are just ignorant, not lout. Or loutess, as the case may be.

As such, you are in for a shock that you can't even shock from the very start. Once you get to England, you won't be shocked any more. No, indeed. You will be in clover. Or perhaps even a "bloody clot."

You see, things are *different* in England. Right from the bat, which is the way we also say all sorts of things else in England, maybe with a bit of a twist depending on whether you're playing rugby or polo, to close your sense of identity.

Straightaway, you will lose your accents — unless that is your native somebody. Tell you what, with these accents about England and English tradition.

But this is why I am writing this latest letter of information. It's based upon long, painful experience in reading English tourists' letters to Englishmen, and meeting English EXPERT representatives in person.

I hope you appreciate that this has indeed been a harrowing experience. Harrowing as in groups of us locals in England try to work out what it means.

Reading English tourists is a little bit like attempting to decipher the Rosetta Stone without the aid of a Napoleon. First of all, English tourists seem to be unfortunately printed on paper which was once used to wrap up fish and chips. Second handicap: even the stuff that is still English tourists are illegible. Even if this difficulty is surmounted, obstacle number three is the fact that no American can understand the language.

The English, for example, never say party. They say do. Or bash. Ridiculous isn't it? Can you imagine somebody in Hawaii, his portie, he feels, is saving, "Tom

member of the Republican Dr[illegible] Or getting up a legal brief and referring to the bash on the first part'?

I could go on and on (and probably will). The English never say 'body'. They say 'bod'. This is important to know because then when you attend your first 'bash' at the convention and somebody says 'I am in command of your first white bod', you understand what they're getting at.

On the telephone the English never say 'Hello' or 'This is Winston Churchill speaking'. They pick up the receiver and say 'Winnie here'. By the way, almost all Englishmen have nicknames (ex. Chuck for Chuckles Harris or Mal for Malcolm Wadsworth or Vince for St Vincent's Angina' Clarke). That's all you need to know because practically every other Englishman you meet will be named James Eric or Brian. There is an Englishman named Bert, but you won't want to meet *him*. And if you happen to be found dead you will avoid him as you would the plague to be (worst known as Ice Tube).

English men love to be dismembered in places. This I gather from my years of reading fan letters. First of all, opening those letters is a problem that would tax the ingenuity of Eric Bentcliffe. And when you consider that Eric Bentcliffe has so little ingenuity he doesn't normally have to open any envelopes at all, you know what I'm up against. Almost every English mail comes in the form of air letters sealed so that it is impossible to cut them open without the aid of the College of Surgeons. Since I only wish to cut the edges I generally employ a rabbi.

But I was telling you that Englishmen love to be dismembered in places such as England. To be more specific they have wind addresses. Over here, of course, half of us live on streets and the other half of us live on boys. But that's

much too sensible for your Englishman. Will he live in a street like the rest of us? Not he. He's sure to be sneaky. He has to have a posh arrangement and live in a few streets at the same time. Such as 50, Maker Street, Long Street. And has separate bedrooms always some place you can't find on the map. Now I have to say I've got a very good map of the British Isles. It isn't the newest map in the world, but it was good enough for King Philip of Spain when he used it to direct the course of the Spanish Armada. In other words this map has been tested in actual use. And in which of them can I find any of these very supplementary addresses like Yorks or Herts or Essex. Frankly, I don't think they're my sort of places at all, and I'd say to get to England I advise you not to waste your time looking for them.

Now, will Englishmen live in boxes? Is snobby. Boxes are good enough for handy old fans like Bob Lacker and myself — but not for your toff friends across the pond. Oh no, they have to live in places with names. Queen's Gate Terrace or Frobisher — the Mount. I can't for the life of me imagine what kind of places these might be. 221 B Baker Street was good enough for Sherlock Holmes. He didn't put on any side. But a sample Finest address isn't good enough for Pamela Bulmer. But then she's fudging the bailiffs.

That's another thing. We don't have bailiffs over here, not barristers, nor solicitors. But England is full of them and you might as well know it now. You're going to meet up with them personally as the result of the Convention party.

Well, there's not much more you ought to know. The rest of it was cooked up for yourself. Parties only if you attend one of those Convention parties.

As to English folk I have met there is little to say. Most of the men have beards. Most of the women do.

From there on, you're on your own. I can only warn you that the water pistol is a feature of every Convention — your Englishman doesn't flirt, he squirts. All Englishwomen are known as "popsies" — just what this connotes you'll have to find out for yourself.

I only wish to bloody hell I were going and could do the same.

Have fun,

Robert Bloch

P.S. In England fun is called "snogging." Actually you can throw away the rest of this letter — this is all you really have to know. — RB

IN MEMORIAM: FRITZ LANG

The article in the *New York Times* for Tuesday August 3, 1976, is headlined "Fritz Lang, Film Director Noted for *M* Dead at 85."

Similar articles with similar headlines appeared in newspapers around the world. Justly praising him for his impressive contributions to motion pictures, some of these obituaries followed the *Times*'s comment that "many who worked for Mr. Lang found him to be an unbearable martinet, an egocentric despot." Several of the notices quoted a paraphrased dismissive rebuttal: "I was something that is always hated in Hollywood—a perfectionist, nobody likes a perfectionist, you know."

This image of a latter day Erich von Stroheim strutting and shouting in the spotlight hardly corresponds to the Fritz Lang who was my friend during the last dozen years of his life.

Perfectionist he surely was, but his strictures were imposed upon himself even more severely than upon others; many times he asked for correction of letters involving grammar and phrasing which were literal

arnst translations from German and English and secured for him so he was awkward or inexact. He frequently questioned concepts in conversation, but analyzed and challenged his own statements with equal sharpness motivated always by a dedication to honesty and clarity of meaning.

Eccentric? All of us whatever our role in life are susceptible to praise and flattery and Fritz Lang enjoyed a full measure of both. But he was essentially a modest man. The hundreds of honors he received — gold medals trophies awards citations ribbons diplomas testimonials — were packed away in drawers rather than displayed in his home.

Mannequin. Perhaps — but scarcely more so than many elderly men with no pretensions to musical achievement and no past position of power or importance to which to cling except in the golden age of German cinema when a director was automatically accorded absolute authority. Old age aching head and eyesight problems which resulted in his being declared legally blind in his last years did cause him to observe a regimen of restricted diet which he stubbornly enforced — often to the distress of hostesses. My wife referred to him once as a moslem expert on cold barracuda.

But when she was hospitalized for surgery the last card she received came from Fritz Lang although it was addressed with his name first. On this gentleman with his taste for exotica was a drawing of a fish and the signature read, "Barry Cuda."

Sorry. For the gourmet I can only add that during our many lengthy visits — at which time we constantly discussed politics philosophy problems involving actors problems of conventions and personal positions on his part which he frequently opposed — I never once detected a fresh scent from the supposed despot's lips. A man who

habitually addresses one as 'angel' under such circumstances is hardly unbearable.

That he raged against stupidity and injustice is undeniable. Any one familiar with his films cannot mistake the anguished anger of this man. But there was great kindness in him, and great compassion. His concern for friends never deserted him even at the end, the day before he lapsed into final and almost complete coma he earnestly inquired about my work and welfare. He worried about his friends and suffered his own misfortunes with humor if not with patience. Always he mocked pretension.

In 1969, when he was still able to travel, he attended the Rio de Janeiro Film Festival. I was also present, as part of a science fiction symposium which served as a sort of sideshow to the main event. At his urging we usually dined together, along with Henri Langlois, Lotte Eisner, and other European friends from the old days. Knowing his visual problems I took it upon myself to meet him at his hotel and guide him through the Copacabana crowds to the restaurant he preferred, which was several blocks away. To my surprise I found that, more often than not, he was guiding me. He'd made a point of *memorizing* the route—the curbstep offs, the obstructing pillars and posts along the way—and charted a methodical course.

The heat and humidity during our stay in Rio were, to employ Lang's favorite word, "unbelievable." At the end of a long day I was often close to exhaustion. On one such occasion we were invited to attend a gala reception held at the huge, modernistically designed Art Center. Hundreds of guests passed through a reception line and then milled around the vast open expanse of the upper level for there were no seating facilities here.

Correction—over in a far corner was a single chair

Somehow Fritz spotted it and led me in that direction. Sitting in the chair was none other than Josef von Sternberg, who had a neatly trimmed goatee beard. Fritz nodded to him and said: "Good evening, Santa Claus! My friend here is tired—get up and give him your seat."

As I write, so many memories come flooding back. There was the time, shortly thereafter, when Fritz Lang was approached by a group of French producers with a proposal to film a film abroad. He told them he would accept on the condition that I be commissioned to do the screenplay and accompany him to France. Coming as it did from a man whose work I'd admired during most of my lifetime, how could I possibly refuse such a flattering offer?

But I did. Fritz's blindness had reached a point where he was unable to observe detail at any distance, and he surely could not control the lighting and camera setups. Much as I sincerely longed to have the honor of working with this man, I felt that the resultant film might not reflect credit upon him in his handicapped state, and so I gently pleaded the pressure of other commitments. The project was dropped, and I believe wisely so, but it remains as one of the hardest decisions I've ever had to make.

The so-called despot was in fact stubborn or intractable. During the early years of our friendship, when he was physically prepared to lecture at film retrospectives and cinema classes, he frequently spoke at universities. Always a political liberal, he was impressed by the young people of the mid Sixties that I had urged earnestly in defense of "hippies" and the counter-culture. I myself had foreboding about the so-called radical youth movement and expressed them. I tried to point out that Fritz's fund of knowledge of their life style was limited and special—the young people who attended his lectures implied him

with compliments and questions were film-buffs and hero worshippers then politeness and deference hardly typical of the majority Fritz, on the basis of his own recollection of Germany in the Twenties, was more inclined to equate them with the Dadaists and the advocates of social reform he'd known at that time And he was utterly opposed to any form of repression or capital punishment even during the period of campus revolts and riots Fritz I must add followed the news closely — with the aid of strong light and a magnifying glass he read newspapers and magazines and books for many hours every day with particular emphasis on political developments

Then came Manson, the growing emergence of street crime, muggings and murders by drug-freaks — and a concomitant catering to sadism and sick amorality in films Sadly he accepted the realities of the situation and changed his mind

But what a brilliant, inquiring mind it was And with what emotion he continued to invest his quest for facts which might lead to an approximation of the truth 'Truth' *per se* was always a relative term in his vocabulary the older he became the fewer absolutes he found to cling to and the more he wondered rather than pontificated.

Nor did he pontificate in his public appearances When questioned about the ideology of his work he invariably and honestly replied, My films speak for themselves

And quite eloquently, I might add For Fritz Lang was — at least during the first fifteen years of his directorial career — one of the few genuine *auteurs* His scripts were collaborative efforts with his wife Thea von Harbou though she received sole screen credit in most instances, he was in a large measure equally responsible for their content The collaboration ended when he fled Germany and she cast

her act with the Nazis but there is no question as to the extent of his contribution to the work which established his reputation.

Of his silent films *Destiny* (1921) remained Lang's personal favourite — and mine. This poetic fantasy of love and death contained many spectacular effects which were later copied by Douglas Fairbanks in *The Thief of Baghdad*. Fairbanks purchased American rights to the picture for this purpose.

The two-part *Dr. Mabuse* was hardly poetic in its depiction of a super-criminal and master of disguise who used everything from hypnosis to financial wizardry in his efforts to gain control of the world. The world in question being — of course — post-WWI Germany, glimpses of its decadent society foreshadow and overshadow the *milieu* recreated in *Cabaret*.

Metropolis, perhaps his most famous film, dealt with the society of the future, with its robots and robotized workers operating under an industrial dictatorship. *The Girl in the Moon* was one of the first films, aside from Melies's early stark, comic efforts to deal with space-flight, its opening sequences of preparation are still amazingly prophetic and include the first use of the countdown for launching the space craft. The next film, *Spies*, was almost a reprise of *Dr. Mabuse* in which Haghi, another arch criminal and man of many disguises, seeks political control with the aid of espionage.

All these films must be viewed within the context of their times. Judged by today's standards, the stories are often simplistic and — as in the actual flight-sequences and lunar episodes of *The Girl in the Moon* — unrealistic. And all are flawed by the flamboyant histrionics of actors and actresses who employed the scenery-chewing

techniques of the Teutonic theatre. To compound the problem for modern audiences, these films are usually currently available only in truncated, badly edited, and often poorly-reassembled versions. *Metropolis*, in particular, has been cut and recut, and Lang repudiated the results.

Die Nibelungen, his two part recreation of the Siegfried legend, combines both the virtues and the faults of Lang's silent films. The first half embodies the poetry and spectacle which he developed in *Destiny*; seen today, it still 'works' in terms of viewer-reaction. Its special effects appear somewhat crude in comparison with those developed during the ensuing half-century, but when one considers that the entire picture was shot within a studio, the result is a tribute to the director's ingenuity. And the thespic excesses seem appropriate to its mythic content. In the second half, however, melodrama takes over, and the arch-villainy seems arch indeed. Again, it must be judged by the standards of the Twenties rather than of today.

Of Lang's sound films, his first took priority in his affections, and I agree. *M* was a classic in its time—and it's still a classic today. I'd unhesitatingly nominate it as one of the ten best films ever made. Like Mamoulian in America and Hitchcock in England, Lang pioneered in the imaginative use of sound on film, every "effect" made a point, and startlingly so. And his use of *suggestion*, rather than explicit depiction of horror, anticipated Val Lewton's celebrated visual restraint by a decade. *M* also bears the distinction of being one of the first films to depict a "monster" in this case a child murderer in terms of sympathetic understanding. His psychological insight pitted itself against taboos still viable today, when few dare to plead the cause of such 'perverts' in our supposedly enlightened society. Forty-five years ago, such a theme was

virtually blasphemous, but Lang was an icon smasher.

Moreover, he eschewed the scenery chewers in his casting, his presentation of the police and the criminal underworld joining forces to track down the murderer whose activities interfered with both groups' normal operations is filled with knowing, deftly understated touches. And Peter Lorre, in his first film role as the killer, gives a superlative performance. Like most of Lang's films, this too is a melodrama, but a multi-leveled one which has yet to be surpassed.

The Last Will of Dr. Mabuse—the effort which led indirectly to Lang's hasty flight from the Nazis, after a suspiciously couched proposal that he assume control over German film making—is seldom seen in this country. It is, however, the best of his master-criminal portraits and again imaginatively employs sound and visual innovations.

In France, he made another film which is not widely shown here, *Liliom*, with Charles Boyer in the title role. Its fantasy sequence, dealing with a "heaven" staffed by winged and unarmed bureaucrats, is delightfully whimsical and not without calculated irony. Virtually all subsequent motion pictures involving harassed angels and heavenly messengers—with a mission on earth, from *Here Comes Mr. Jordan* on, are anticipated here.

Lang's American career was hampered by studio restrictions. no longer did he reign supreme as *die Regie*, with unlimited and absolute authority. But he made *Fury*, *You Only Live Once*, *You and Me*, *Manhunt*, and *The Big Heat*, and his own favorite, *Scarlet Street*, despite interference and compromise—these films bear the Lang *imprimatur*. Throughout a score of less-distinguished efforts there are still rewarding flashes of inventive imagination and technical mastery.

The accent, however, is upon melodrama. Never again did he have the opportunity to indulge his flair for fantasy to the full or examine the human condition in terms of its myths and legends, and this perhaps is a loss as well as Lang's. A rebel who chafed against the restrictions of reality and questioned its meaning, he was fated to deal with the conventional Hollywood 'product' in the later stages of his career.

Frustration took its toll, but he retained his wryly philosophic sense of humour. Age and infirmity were added indignities to be borne, often with exasperation and, so inevitably were the misinterpretations of his work by certain self-styled 'film historians' and critics. Lang was never one to suffer fools gladly, but in the end he returned hopefully to his *dictum* — 'My films speak for me.' Thus they do, and will — with increasing clarity — upon reassessment.

His lifelong love of fantasy is mirrored in many of his most famous films for all to see. Not so evident is the reflection of his private preoccupation with the field. Early in our acquaintance I was surprised to discover that his personal library included most of the early Arkham House books — *The Outsider and Others*, *Beyond the Wall of Sleep*, and work by other members of the Lovecraft Circle — as well included Lake, Christopher Lee and Boris Karloff. He was well acquainted with H. P. Lovecraft's efforts and admired them.

Speaking of Karloff, let me close with another memory involving a dinner party at our home. Mr. and Mrs. Karloff were among the guests. When informed that Fritz had never met Boris and greatly desired to do so, we invited him and his longtime associate, Lily Latte, to join us that evening.

Upon being introduced, Fritz beamed fondly on Boris

and said "So pleased to see you! You know — we two are the last of the dinosaurs."

Well, the last of the dinosaurs are gone forever. First Boris Karloff, and now Fritz Lang.

Gone, but not forgotten. Never to be forgotten by those privileged to walk the earth in the shadow of such greatness.

WILL THE REAL AUTHOR OF *PSYCHO* PLEASE STAND UP?

Despite the somewhat frivolous nature of its title let me assure you that this article serves a serious purpose It fills up space

In addition to which it may help to dispel rumors clarify misconceptions clear up acne and skin blemishes, and banish the burning, itching torture of hemorrhoids It may, but I doubt it.

Let s take off the propellor beanie and get to the point If any

Five years ago a book was published by Simon & Schuster Its title was *Psycho*, and its byline was Robert Bloch Since then it has been reprinted in a magazine offered in a condensed book-digest format ing one through six paperback editions here and seven in England been published in twelve languages in sixteen countries and was produced as a three act play on the island of Mauritius

Four years ago, a motion picture was released by Paramount Pictures, Inc Its title was *Psycho*, and the screenplay was credited to Joseph Stefano The film was as I understand it moderately successful becoming the

second highest grossing black and white movie ever made topped only by *The Birth of a Nation* which has been around a while longer — in fact, it was the first film Bob Hecker ever ran as a projectionist.

Ever since these unfortunate occurrences it seems as if I've been confused with Joseph Stefano. And this has got to stop. I'm confused enough *without* Joseph Stefano.

I have, of course, several practical solutions.

I could kill Joseph Stefano.

I could kill myself.

The two of us could make a deal to commit suicide together.

Our second thought (the latter wouldn't be practical because of us sadomasochistic tendencies) is to make a deal with a bungling mafia agents, and once that happens I'm sure our natural impulse would be to kill our agents instead.

So the only thing to do is state the facts. Which are simple.

Robert Bloch is no Joseph Stefano. They are two separate and distinct people. Bloch is the separate one and Stefano is the distinct one.

Stefano is a ex New Yorker. Italian extraction. Bloch is born-n-bred mid-west and his only extraction consists of a bad wisdom-tooth in 1951.

Stefano is 40, married, and lives in a big house with a swimming pool. Bloch is either 42 or 117 depending on whether you see him during or after a Convention. He is divorced. Bloch has a swimming pool too, but it's inside. He lives in the pool and has a small portion upstairs.

Stefano was the architect of successful productions of *Gypsy* and *Hatful of Rain*, last seen in Bloch has been scrounging around Hollywood for almost five years trying to engage in sequential dance with William Reisler. Stefano has benefits

a successful writer producer can often be found at the luxurious Beverly Hilton Hotel. Bloch can be found at the Beverly Hilton too—in the Men's Room, holding a whisk-broom.

There is actual Photographic proof that the two men are real. In 1961, Bloch was toastmaster for the annual banquet of the Mystery writers of America. Stefano was a guest. There was a picture taken of Bloch handing Stefano an award for *Psycho*. Unfortunately, Bloch was presented an award for *Psycho* too. Or maybe it was two other guys. The only other shot of them together was with actress Shirley Jones who had nothing to do with *Psycho* and never will unless there's a musical version.

Of course in the long run it doesn't matter. Stefano's publicity people may go on billing him as the author of *Psycho* and Bloch's publicity agent Helen Keller may go on doing the same.

But the public won't be fooled.

Everyone knows that *Psycho* was written by Alfred Hitchcock.

THE BLACK REVEALER

The correspondence section of *Weird Tales* magazine was called The Eyrie — but it was not for the birds. It was instead a most unusual letter column in which writers' comments often outnumbered those of the readers.

If it sometimes resembled the minutes of a mutual admiration society, the phenomenon was understandable. Contemporary authors of horror were given short shrift by publishers and reviewers in those dark days. In consequence they had a tendency to band together, assisting and encouraging one another in the tradition of what was to become known as 'the Lovecraft Circle'. The appearance of a worthy newcomer in *Weird Tales* pages generally drew favorable response from established writers as well as the fans.

The Thirties was a decade of discovery during which authors and readers alike were excited by the arrival of outstanding new talent upon the scene. When C. L. Moore's Shambleau reached print, the Eyrie overflowed with praise. The same enthusiasm greeted Henry Kuttner's 'The Graveyard Rats.' Mary Elizabeth Counselman's

The Eyes Market Pe[illegible] and Carl Jacobi's Revelations in Black

These were the books that C. L. Moore, Kuttner and Carl Jacobi were to [illegible] some study contributions in time branched out into other fields

Carl Jacobi with only a few exceptions continued to publish in the magazine which had discovered and delighted in his early creations. A stream [illegible] of stories subsequently [illegible]—such stories as The Cube, The Scarlet Planet and Cannibals Fish—all bearing the imprint of his peculiar imagination and approach to the traditional tale of terror.

I have mentioned how avidly readers discovered Lovecraft's weirdness in these two issues and how quickly ghetto were seldom single out for praise was or biographical [illegible] As a result even the readers of *Weird Tales* knew very little about their favorite authors. It seems something of [illegible] that C. L. Moore's first name was Catherine and that [illegible] of the thousand fans knew that Basil Wolverton and G. G. Pendarves were pseudonyms as yet to [illegible] had yet to [illegible] Wonder Stories.

Carl Jacobi was an equally mysterious figure to most of his readers. And despite his popularity with *Weird Tales* readers [illegible] he received insufficient attention elsewhere.

Over a decade passed before his first collection was published by Arkham House under the title of *Revelations in Black* and during [illegible] lapsed between this and the second collection, *Disclosures in Scarlet*.

These books were not [illegible] notice. I myself reviewed the first in a 1948 issue of *The Arkham Sampler*, but it appeared [illegible] and [illegible] following. Any [illegible] absence of more widespread publicity [illegible] of Carl Jacobi's [illegible] rather than a lowering

So matters stood for many years. Then, in the early Seventies, fantasy entered upon a period of renaissance. The discoveries of the Twenties and Thirties were rediscovered by new generations of readers. Work long out of print was again available in anthologies, and new critics found praise for long-neglected fabricators of fantasy. In England Neville Spearman reprinted *Revelations in Black*, which won fresh and deserved acclaim.

But its author remained a man of mystery.

In 1973 I went to Toronto as Guest of Honor at the World Science Fiction Convention. There, after attracting several thousand fans, authors, artists, editors and publishers, and my time was occupied for at least 18 hours a day.

It wasn't until Sunday that a friend and correspondent caught up with me in a crowded room and said, "Carl Jacobi is upstairs."

I stood speechless, dumbfounded. Carl Jacobi, here?

He came with me from Minneapolis," my informant said. "Seldom been out of Minnesota in his entire lifetime. His health hasn't been too good lately, and the trip was a strain. He's rested in his room ever since we arrived, but I know he'd be glad to see you. Would you like to meet him?"

Instantly I found my voice. "Lead the way," I said.

He did.

It would be gratifying to report that the forty-five minutes I spent with Carl Jacobi resulted in some dramatic and startling disclosures. Gratifying, but untrue.

The real revelation of our meeting was in his graciousness and modesty. We talked, as might be expected, about the names that meant magic in our youth—H. P. Lovecraft, Farnsworth Wright, August Derleth, Virgil Finlay—each of whom had played a part in our early professional careers.

But it was only with difficulty that I persuaded Carl Jacobi to speak of his own work and of his plans for writing projects. And when he had at long last summoned the resolution to journey all the way to Europe for this his first World Convention, I could not entice him to join the cowans and ghuns and fans and fellow writers who would be delighted to see him there. But he indeed seemed pale, feeble and I could understand why he felt the need to rest.

Early this year I was able to prepare for the Awards Banquet at which I was scheduled to speak. I urged him to attend but he said he really could not afford the time. We parted on a note of mutual cordiality.

The Banquet came and went and so did I. It wasn't until after I returned home that I learned Carl Jacobi had at the last moment reversed his decision and summoned his strength to appear at the ceremonies.

Prior to speaking, I'd debated whether or not to mention his presence at the Convention. But in the end I decided he would consider an invasion of his privacy which he might not appreciate under the circumstances.

When I discovered that he had indeed been present, I regretted the opportunity — now I never lost — to introduce him at the Banquet to his fans and friends.

But perhaps that opportunity is not entirely ended. I know what I would have said then, and with your indulgence, let me say it now.

My friends, we are honored to have with us one of the truly outstanding contributors in the field of fantastic fiction — a writer whose active time has been given to the genre during a long lifetime of literary devotion.

All too frequently we tend to offer our gratitude to these dedicated individuals only in the form of a memorial

Let us, therefore, take pleasure in the fact that we can pay tribute to a living talent and represent in his presence among us. Let us honor a man who has honored us with his lifelong outstanding creative achievement — Mr. Carl Jacobi."

ANOTHER PART OF THE FORREST

"If there wasn't Forrest J Ackerman it would be necessary to invent one."

Voltaire said that in 1782 shortly after he watched. And shortly before Forrest J Ackerman was born.

It's true, of course. If there was no Forrest J Ackerman it *would* be necessary to invent one. And quite possible too.

What do you think we have all those mad scientists for?

I don't know the answer to that, but I do know what we have Forry Ackerman for.

About forty years, that's what.

During that time — forty three years to be precise — Ackerman has been a science fiction fan. And during a great percentage of that time he has been the world's leading science fiction fan. Leading to who can say? That's a good question.

Perhaps one of the ways of answering it is this.

Ackerman was among the very first fans to write regularly to the prozines — one of the very first to seek out and correspond with other fans — to founder

of one of the first fan clubs, still very much in existence today; inauguration of fanzine columns and commentary on science fiction in films, radio and the theatre; in the van of the early sf book collectors, including the vain if Voigt I add hastily just because at I didn't Forry would do it for me. In later years Ackerman was instrumental in the transcontinental and transoceanic treks to sf conventions, literally blazing a path which others followed in subsequent years. Now such jaunts are commonplace, but it was Ackerman who first bridged the gap and the miles separating the widely-scattered elements of random fandom.

As an adult Ackerman has distinguished himself as a writer, an agent, an editor, a leading authority on science fiction and fantasy films, a bibliophile, a collector of sf memorabilia and forgetabilia gathered together in the fabulous collection which overflows his 'Ackermansion' and obstructs decent godfearing citizens on their way to the bathroom (where they'll find still more of the stuff). He functions as critic, speaker, technical advisor, has acted in motion pictures, made guest appearances on radio and television, and ranged the world over to seek out fans and fangatherings in a manner indicating that to him fandom is truly a way of life. Long before his editorship of *Famous Monsters of Filmland* attracted a youthful following, Forry was dreadsmaking and taking time to befriend young fans; his generosity to neos is traditional in the field.

Yours truly please cut all —another Voltaire quotation circa 1698. Which means that like all of us, Ackerman has had his share of detractors and critical adversaries in his time. But to those who presume to regard him as a 'science fiction freak' there is one obvious question:

What would the science fiction field have been like over this past forty years without Forrest J Ackerman?

And, of course, an obvious answer

A damned sight poorer.

His contribution to science fiction fandom has enriched us all

This book was designed by Jim Mann; set in Baskerville by Jim Mann and Andy Cowan at Typo-Tech Reproduction Center, Inc., with help from Claire Anderson, George Flynn, and a horde of others; and printed on Neutral pH 60# paper by Braun-Brumfield, Inc. of Ann Arbor, Michigan.

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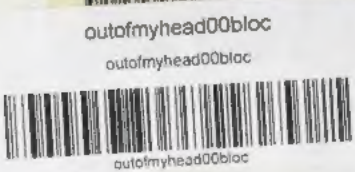

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